

BRITAIN'S BEST MILITARY HISTORY MAGAZINE

# HISTORY of WAR™



**MUSSOLINI'S BOMBERS**  
INSIDE ITALY'S DEADLY RAIDER SQUADRONS



DESERT RATS IN NORMANDY

## BATTLE FOR CAEN



- ★ OPERATION GOODWOOD
- ★ TIGER ACE AMBUSH
- ★ LIBERATION HEROES



**BAYONET CHARGE HERO**  
Medal of Honor  
valour in Korea



**HITLER'S ASSASSINS**

How did the 20 July plotters almost topple the Nazi regime?



**JOAN OF ARC'S GENIUS**

Rediscovering the Maid of Orléans' forgotten campaigns



**RUSSIA VS BRITAIN**

Uncover the Great Game's colonial clashes and proxy wars

FUTURE  
ISSUE 070

# KING & COUNTRY'S

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This new K&C PANTHER includes a Waffen SS tank commander figure and belongs to the 2nd SS Panzer Division 'DAS REICH'.

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Set

WS356

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*A knocked-out Cromwell Observation Post tank, commanded by Captain Paddy Victory of 5th Royal Horse Artillery, 7th Armoured Division, in Villers-Bocage, 5 August 1944*

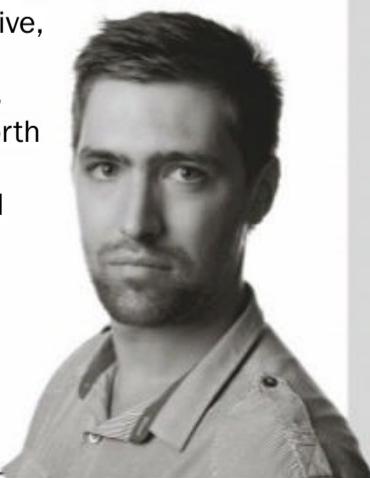


# Welcome

In the aftermath of the D-Day landings, Allied forces quickly set about establishing a solid foothold in Normandy. The city of Caen, in the British sector of the invasion, remained in German hands into July, despite being a 6 June objective, and as such soon became a focus of operations.

Among the forces deployed as part of these offensives was the famed 7th Armoured Division, fresh from the desert of North Africa. However, as Anthony Tucker-Jones explores this issue, the 'Desert Rats' faced a very different challenge in the lethal bocage terrain of northern France.

**Tim Williamson**  
Editor-in-Chief



## CONTRIBUTORS

### TOM GARNER

This issue Tom returned to his medieval roots, exploring the lesser-known campaigns of Joan of Arc. Starting on page 38, he discovers how the Maid of Orléans made her name as a military leader and how she was finally defeated.



### ANTHONY TUCKER-JONES

Historian Anthony is the author of several titles on WWII and other modern conflicts. This issue he uncovers how the 7th Armoured Division fared in the Normandy campaign, as part of Monty's battle for Caen (page 26).



### JON TRIGG

The July 20 Plot was the closest attempt on Hitler's life, and could have changed the course of WWII. This month Jon investigates who the plotters were and how they planned to topple the Nazi regime (page 52).



# DESERT RATS IN NORMANDY



**26** Discover how the veteran 7th Armoured Division met its toughest challenge during the Battle for Caen

## Frontline

### 14 The Great Game

During the 19th century the two empires of Russia and Britain became deadly rivals

### 18 A controversial policy

Paranoia over Russian expansion caused Britain to seek control over a number of other states

### 20 Anglo-Persian War

A war with Persia (what today is Iran) was just one of a number of proxy conflicts that flared up as the two superpowers faced off

### 22 Adventurers, Emirs & generals

Rulers and military leaders from across Asia, and the Middle East contributed their skills to the Cold War of the Victorian Era

## Subscribe

**50** Receive your copy of **History of War** before it's available in the shops, plus save money on the cover price!

## JOAN OF ARC'S DOOMED CAMPAIGN

**38** After finding fame with the Siege of Orléans, the French heroine led a long and difficult campaign against the English



# VERSAILLES WINNERS & LOSERS



**46** 100 years ago the victorious powers of WWI gathered to mete out punishments, reshape borders and consolidate world powers

**Great Battles**

## BATTLE OF ZENTA

**60** Hapsburg forces line up against Ottoman Sultan Mustafa II to strike a decisive blow during the Great Turkish War

- 06 WAR IN FOCUS**  
Stunning imagery from throughout history
- 26 Desert Rats in Normandy**  
In the aftermath of D-Day, Monty called upon British armour to help take Caen
- 38 Joan of Arc's doomed campaign**  
After a successful siege, the Maid of Orléans faced a series of challenges
- 46 Versailles: winners & losers**  
How the world was reshaped a century ago
- 52 Hitler's assassins**  
Who were the men behind the 20 July plot?
- 60 GREAT BATTLES**  
**Zenta**  
The great struggle for dominance in Eastern Europe comes to a bloody climax
- 68 OPERATOR'S HANDBOOK**  
**Savoia-Marchetti SM.79**  
A look inside Italy's WWII bomber
- 74 HEROES OF THE MEDAL OF HONOR**  
**Rodolfo Hernández**  
True story of bravery from the Korean War
- 78 Operation Neck**  
Special Operations Executive agent Dick Mallaby prepares for a dangerous mission

**HISTORY**  
*of*  
**WAR**

**HOMEFRONT**

- 86 Museums & events**  
The latest exhibitions and discoveries
- 88 OPINION**  
**The 'D-Day circus'**  
Was remembrance drowned out?
- 91 Historic Photographer of the Year 2019**  
Entries for the awards are now open
- 92 Reviews**  
The latest history book releases
- 96 5 best books on...**  
Battle for Normandy
- 98 ARTEFACT OF WAR**  
**French officer's coat**  
A colourful piece of 18th C. uniform





## WAR in FOCUS

### SEASIDE SUB

Taken: 1919

German submarine SM U-118 attracts a fascinated crowd as it lies stricken on the beach of Hastings, on England's south coast. The boat was commissioned early in 1918 and embarked on just one patrol before the surrender of the Imperial German Navy in November 1919. It washed ashore after breaking from its towing vessel, while en route to France.

# WAR in FOCUS

## RED SANDS SEA FORTS

Taken: 2018

This stunning photograph by Mark Edwards won the English History category of the Historic Photographer of the Year Awards 2018. Built in the Thames Estuary during WWII, these sea forts were intended to protect London from enemy air attacks. Entries are now open for the 2019 awards: turn to page 91 for more information on how you can enter.





Image: Mark Edwards – Historic Photographer of the Year 2018 (English history)





**WAR  
in  
FOCUS**  
**DOG SOLDIER**

*Taken: April 1984*

A British soldier of The Queen's Regiment stands ready beside an IRA mural in Belfast, during The Troubles. Three battalions of the Regiment toured in Northern Ireland between 1969 and 1992, before amalgamating with the Royal Hampshire Regiment to form the Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment, named after its then Commander in Chief, Princess Diana.



## WAR in FOCUS

### CZECH-MATE

Taken: March 1939

German troops march out of the gates of Prague Castle, after Nazi Germany completed its full annexation of the country. The Munich Agreement the previous year ceded the German-speaking Sudetenland to Hitler, on the promise that no further Czech territory would be seized. Reneging on this promise, Czechoslovakia was annexed six months later.



**TIMELINE OF...**

# THE GREAT GAME

Britain and Russia participated in a 19th century ‘Cold War’ involving invasions and proxy conflicts over Afghanistan and neighbouring territories



*The Last Stand of the  
44th Regiment at  
Gundamuck, 1842*

1782-1834

## BRITISH EXPLORATIONS

Beginning with George Foster in 1782, employees of the East India Company travel through Afghanistan in search of Central Asian trade routes and include Company soldiers such as Arthur Conolly, Alexander Burnes and Henry Pottinger. Russian traders are already active and the activities of the British slowly create diplomatic tensions.



*An illustration of Sindhian infantrymen from Henry Pottinger's book Travels In Baluchistan And Sindh*

## RUSSIAN EXPANSION

Russia greatly increases its territory during the 19th century by expanding to the east and south. Russian forces advance from Siberia to occupy the Kazakh Khanate (modern Kazakhstan), and this makes them the dominant regional power in Central Asia.

*Siberian Cossacks are an important part of the Russian Army's military endeavours*



1824-54

*A cartoon depicting an Afghan tribesman flanked by a Russian bear and British lion*



12 January 1830

## THE GAME BEGINS

Russia fears British power spreading into Central Asia while Britain is concerned that Russia will add colonial India to their expansive territory. In January 1830, the British government official for the East India Company tasks the Indian governor-general to establish a new trade route to Bukhara (Uzbekistan). The intention is to turn the Emirate of Afghanistan into a British protectorate.

**"VIRTUALLY ALL OF THE 16,500 BRITISH AND INDIAN SOLDIERS, WORKERS AND CIVILIANS ARE KILLED, CAPTURED OR GO MISSING"**

### FIRST ANGLO-AFGHAN WAR

The East India Company invades Afghanistan to ostensibly settle a succession dispute between rival Afghan emirs Dost Mohammad Khan and Shah Shujah. The British occupy Kabul and restore Shujah to the Afghan throne. The occupation is unpopular, the British withdraw and Dost Mohammad is restored.

1837-38

July 1839–October 1842



Assistant Surgeon William Brydon becomes famous as the only survivor of the British force to reach safety during the retreat from Kabul. In reality, others survive including Indian sepoy soldiers and a "Greek merchant"



### RETREAT FROM KABUL 02

The British are forced to withdraw from Kabul and the following retreat to Jalalabad results in the destruction of the imperial force. Virtually all of the 16,500 British and Indian soldiers, workers and civilians are killed, captured or go missing.

6-13 January 1842

11 December 1845-9 March 1846

### SIEGE OF HERAT 01

Persian forces besiege the Afghan city of Herat as part of an attempt to reconquer Afghanistan for Mohammad Shah Qajar. The British and Russians observe developments while intimidating the Persians with military and political threats. After the British send a naval expedition to the Persian Gulf, the siege is lifted and the Persians withdraw.

Eldred Pottinger arrives at Herat. Sir John McNeill joins Pottinger while the Russian observers are Count Simonich and Jan Prosper Witkiewicz



### FIRST ANGLO-SIKH WAR

The Sikh Empire in the Punjab refuses to allow British troops to pass through during the First Anglo-Afghan War. The Sikhs then invade colonial India to forestall a British attack but they are defeated in several bloody battles. Their kingdom is then partially subjugated with Jammu and Kashmir becoming a separate state under British suzerainty.

Maharaja Duleep Singh submits to Sir Henry Hardinge





**BATTLE OF SOBRAON 03**

The fourth and final battle of the First Anglo-Sikh War, Sobraon is a decisive British victory. The Sikhs are entrenched by the Sutlej River but their positions are stormed after an intense artillery duel. More than 10,000 Sikhs are killed but the British also suffer heavy casualties of 2,383.

*The 3rd King's Own Light Dragoons charge at Sobraon*

A war elephant throws its rider during the Siege of Multan

**BATTLE OF GUJRAT 04**

Gujrat is the decisive engagement of the Second Anglo-Sikh War. Sir Hugh Gough defeats a Sikh-Afghan force with superior artillery fire and a British infantry advance. Dost Mohammad Khan, Emir of Afghanistan, is forced to acknowledge the British possession of Peshawar.

Over 2,000 Sikhs and Afghans are killed at Gujrat compared to 96 British who show no mercy

**SECOND ANGLO-SIKH WAR**

Mulraj, Governor of Multan, leads a national revolt against the British with the help of the defecting Sikh Army. Indecisive, but ferocious battles are fought that result in the British fully annexing the Punjab. One region in particular acts as a buffer zone with Afghanistan and becomes known as the North-West Frontier Province.

## SECOND ANGLO-AFGHAN WAR

Russian influence grows in Afghanistan during the 1870s, which prompts the British to send an uninvited diplomatic mission to Kabul. The British are refused entry while Russian envoys are received. This results in a second war and two British occupations of Kabul. Afghanistan's modern borders are defined by Britain and Russia while several territories are also ceded to British India.



Soldiers of the 45th Sikh Regiment guard three Afghan prisoners. These men are captured during an advance through the Khyber Pass

## BATTLE OF KANDAHAR 06

An imperial relief force commanded by General Frederick Roberts marches to relieve the survivors of Maiwand who are besieged at Kandahar. Ayub Khan breaks off the siege to fight Roberts but he is decisively defeated. With the loss of the Afghan artillery, supplies and many men, the battle at Kandahar ends the Second Anglo-Afghan War.



The 92nd Gordon Highlanders storm Gundi Mulla Sahibdad during the Battle of Kandahar

## PANJDEH INCIDENT 07

Britain and Russia almost go to war when the Russians occupy several posts on the vaguely defined Afghan border around Panjdeh. 900 Afghans are killed when the Russians capture Ak Teppe but the growing crisis is eased when the emir of Afghanistan deliberately interprets events as a small border skirmish. Russia and Britain ultimately establish a Central Asian buffer zone.

Tsar Alexander III and General Nikolai Obruchev observe a map that depicts Britain and Russia as two predators preying on vulnerable Afghanistan in an 1885 British cartoon



1 November 1856-4 April 1857

1878-80

27 July 1880

1 September 1880

1885

31 August 1907

## ANGLO-PERSIAN WAR

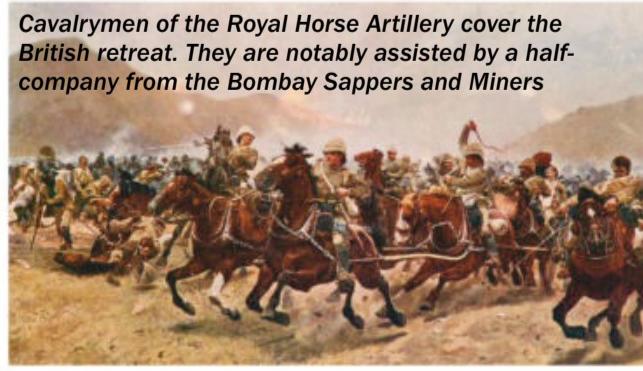
Persia violates an Anglo-Persian treaty by taking Herat. The British launch a punitive campaign on the southern Iranian coast and Mesopotamia, which results in the Treaty of Paris. The Persians agree to withdraw from Herat while the British leave southern Iran.



Lieutenant Arthur Moore wins a Victoria Cross at the Battle of Khushab, the largest engagement of the conflict

## BATTLE OF MAIWAND 05

Afghan forces led by Ayub Khan defeat two brigades of British and Indian troops but at a high price. 2,500-3,000 Afghans are killed or wounded while the imperial troops suffer casualties of over 1,000. Maiwand is the last occasion when British regimental colours are taken on active service.



Cavalrymen of the Royal Horse Artillery cover the British retreat. They are notably assisted by a half-company from the Bombay Sappers and Miners

## ANGLO-RUSSIAN CONVENTION

Historians are divided as to when the Great Game ends but a 1907 convention is a strong contender. Convened in St Petersburg, Russia and Britain solidify boundaries that identify respective control in Central Asia, including Afghanistan and Iran.

The agreement leads to the formation of the Triple Entente of the two countries along with France.

Partially borne out of the Great Game, the Triple Entente forms the core of the initial Allied powers during WWI



# A CONTROVERSIAL POLICY

During the 19th century, paranoia of Russian expansion in Asia led to the introduction of a defensive policy that sought to control external states and led to bloodshed

**T**hroughout the so-called Great Game, Britain's principal fear was a Russian invasion of India, the jewel in the crown of empire. Concern over Russian expansion in Asia became so acute during the 19th century that successive governments in London were engulfed in paranoia of the Tsar's troops pouring over India's northern border. In retrospect, this obsession was perhaps misplaced, but at the time it felt real enough for Britain to adopt an aggressive forward policy to ensure the security of their most valued colonial possession. Many argued for a defensive line to be pushed forward of India's border in order to meet a potential invading force long before it could threaten India itself.

In 1846, 2,000 miles lay between the southern borders of the Russian Empire and

*George Nathaniel Curzon, 1st Marquess Curzon of Kedleston*

territory held by the British in India. By 1885, this distance had shrunk to a mere 500 miles as the two empires slowly edged ever closer to each other. The British believed they needed a strong line of defence – but the question was where? To answer this military strategists of the period began to fall into one of two camps. Firstly, there were those who proposed a forward policy, the more extreme of which called for a defensive line to be established far beyond India's borders, where it would engage and defeat an advancing Russian army many miles from India. The more moderate exponents of this view also believed in this basic idea, but they wanted a specific line of defence closer to the border.

The second prominent view was a stationary policy, which argued for a static defensive line to be established along the mighty Indus River. Others who subscribed to this idea believed that, if circumstances dictated it prudent, the defensive line could be pushed out from the Indus to face the Russian advance. The policy adopted varied over time, but the forward school eventually prevailed due to Russia's continued encroachment in Asia.

An example of a consequence of the forward doctrine can be seen in the Second Anglo-Afghan War of 1878-80. To stem Russian influence in the country, following the arrival of a Russian delegation at Kabul in July 1878, the British demanded the Afghan Amir surrender control of his foreign policy to authorities in India. When the Amir refused to accept a British diplomatic mission several months later, the British issued an ultimatum they knew the Amir would not accept and declared war. The first phase of the war ended with the signing of the Treaty of Gandamak in May 1879, forcing the Amir to cede several of his frontier districts to the British. However, when the bulk of British forces withdrew from Afghanistan, the war flared up again, ending in 1880 only after considerable military effort by the British.

In 1888, Lord Lansdowne became Viceroy of India. He proposed a boundary be established along 'scientific' lines through territory

sandwiched between British-India and Afghanistan. The route of the line was worked out by Sir Henry Durand, the foreign secretary of India, and the Afghan Amir, and was designed to take into consideration the defence of India. This new border, which became known as the Durand Line, arbitrarily cut through Pashtun tribal areas and set out spheres of influence for British-India and Afghanistan. Most importantly for the British, it reinforced the notion of Afghanistan acting as a buffer state between India and Russia.

The Durand Line, however, failed to take into consideration the feelings of the Pashtun tribes that inhabited the North West Frontier. These tribesmen, quite rightly, saw the border as both unnecessary and unwelcome. They paid little attention to it and even destroyed markers placed to demarcate the line.

To make matters worse, the British built roads and established forts, to protect important routes to places such as Chitral, in Pashtun territory, which greatly alienated the fiercely independent tribesmen. It would become a major contributing factor to the frontier risings of 1897, perhaps the greatest challenge to British authority in Asia since the Indian Mutiny four decades earlier.

In the wake of the risings, which were unprecedented in scale, Lord Curzon, who had been appointed Viceroy of India in 1899, introduced major political and organisational changes, including the establishment of the North West Frontier Province. He ordered the withdrawal of British forces from Pashtun territory, recruiting local tribesmen to police the frontier instead. Nevertheless, the controversial forward policy did not finally come to an end until 1907, following the Anglo-Russian Convention of the same year, which defined borders and spheres of influence between the two powers. Today, the route of the Durand Line still demarcates Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (formerly North West Frontier Province), Balochistan and Gilgit-Baltistan from the southern districts of Afghanistan, although the Afghan Government refuses to officially recognise this relic of British imperialism.

**"IN 1846, 2,000 MILES LAY BETWEEN THE SOUTHERN BORDERS OF THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE AND TERRITORY HELD BY THE BRITISH IN INDIA. BY 1885, THIS DISTANCE HAD SHRUNK TO A MERE 500 MILES AS THE TWO EMPIRES SLOWLY EDGED EVER CLOSER TO EACH OTHER"**



Pashtun tribesmen attack Shabkadr Fort during the North West Frontier risings in 1897, a consequence of British forward policy



# ANGLO-PERSIAN WAR

1856-57

During one of several proxy wars in the colonial struggle, Britain fought a seemingly unlikely war borne out of tensions over Afghanistan

**D**uring the 19th century, Britain believed Persia was heavily influenced by Russia. Persia had clashed with Russia during the Russo-Persian Wars of 1804-13 and 1826-1828, both ending in Russian victory and the ceding of Persian territory to the victor. By 1828, Russia effectively controlled the Caucasus and forced Persia to allow a Russian fleet in the Caspian Sea. Russia also

effectively diminished Britain's own standing in the region, raising tensions between the two powers during the Great Game.

Persia had slipped into a state of economic exhaustion and political anarchy during the 1830s. Desperate to restore some of their former empire, the ruling Qajar dynasty sought to retake the city of Herat, now within Afghanistan's borders. Russia encouraged the move, sending Count Simonich to the

Persian Shah's camp as an advisor. It was a blatant attempt by St Petersburg to exploit British paranoia regarding the security of India and damage diplomatic relations between Persia and Britain. The ensuing Siege of Herat, however, dragged on unsuccessfully, allowing the British time to seize the initiative by sending an intimidating naval expedition to the Persian Gulf. The Shah backed down.

**"THE BRITISH MADE THEIR PREPARATIONS FOR AN ASSAULT RIGHT UNDER THE EYES OF THE PERSIAN DEFENDERS. THIS SIGHT MUST HAVE BEEN A FRIGHTENING ONE, AS THE 2,000 STRONG GARRISON ABRUPTLY SURRENDERED"**

The 20th Bombay Native Infantry assaulting Bushire during the Anglo-Persian War



The Persians, however, refused to drop their claim to Herat, despite knowing how important an independent Afghanistan was to Britain. Nevertheless, a new bid was made to take the city, and on 25 October 1856, it finally fell to Persian troops. The British responded by declaring war on Persia days later.

### The British Expedition

The British sought to mount a punitive expedition to force the Shah to again back down. To do this they decided to land a force at the port city of Bushire, a major gateway into Persia, then advance into the interior. Thus, a fleet assembled in India to transport a division under the command of Major-General Foster Stalker, consisting of 5,670 fighting men and 3,750 followers. The expedition left Bombay on 13/14 November.

Arriving off Bushire on 30 November, the men were landed at Halieh Bay on 7 December, a few miles south of the city. The advance began on the morning of the 9 December, leading elements of the expedition reaching the strongly occupied Reshire Fort at 9.30am.

When the main body of the expedition caught up, the British opened fire with artillery, the

defenders retaliating with fierce musket fire. Courageously, the British and Indian infantry successfully stormed the fort at the point of their bayonets.

Thomas McKenize of the 64th Foot recalled the death of his commanding officer during the head-on assault, "It was here that Brigadier Stopford fell into my arms, shot through the heart ... I can never forget his words 'O my God, McKenzie, I'm shot'. He handed me his sword ... I immediately took from my haversack a bandage, etc, took his jacket off, and was applying the bandage when a doctor arrived and pronounced him about dead."

The next day, the British resumed their march to Bushire, while the fleet offshore shelled the city. Taking up positions 500 yards from the city's walls, the British made their preparations for an assault right under the eyes of the Persian defenders. This sight must have been a frightening one, as the 2,000 strong garrison abruptly surrendered.

### The Persian Campaign

With Bushire secured, the British began to probe inland. However, on 20 January 1857, Lieutenant-General Sir James Outram arrived

with reinforcements. Assuming command of the entire force, the general decided to mount an attack on Borazjun, where it was believed Persian forces were amassing to retake Bushire. When Outram's force neared the town on 5 February, the Persians abandoned it. Moving on, the British spotted Persian troops withdrawing towards some mountains. Outram did not wish to fight in such terrain, instead marching for Khusab to replenish water supplies before retiring back to Bushire.

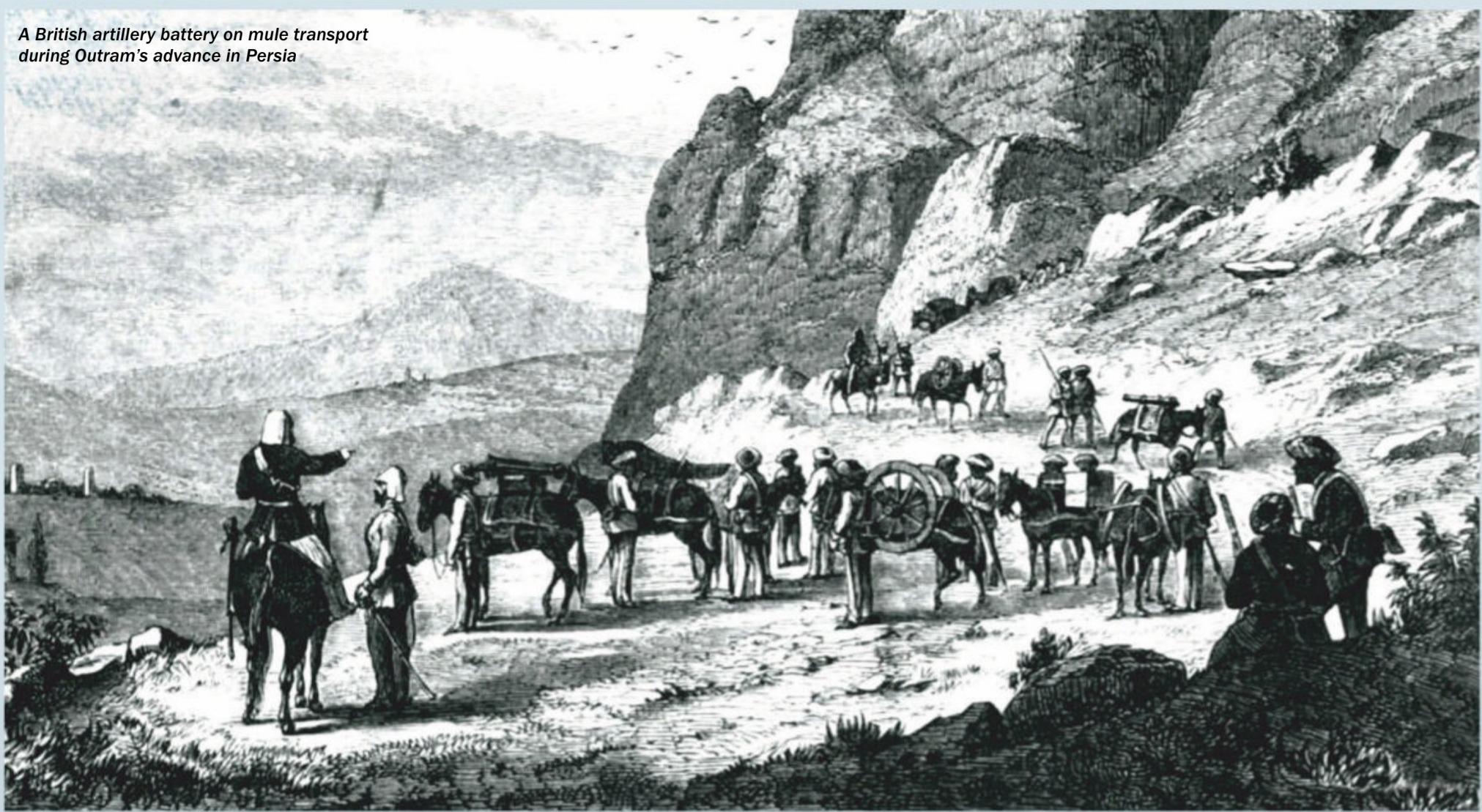
Perhaps believing the British were unwilling to fight, the Persians amassed 8,000 men under Prince Khanlar Mirza near Khusab on 7 February. Realising the threat, Outram immediately ordered an attack, the 3rd Bombay Light Cavalry mercilessly cutting and slashing their way into a Persian infantry square, earning the regiment two Victoria Crosses. The Battle of Khushab would turn out to be the largest action of the war, resulting in 700 Persian casualties while the British suffered 20 killed and 64 wounded.

Edwin Maude, an officer in the 4th Rifles, described how his regiment came under a vicious attack later that night, "It was pitch dark, and about midnight the whole heavens



Image: Alamy

A British artillery battery on mule transport during Outram's advance in Persia



seemed lighted up, and our devoted rear-guard was enveloped in a circle of fire! The enemy ... appeared all around us, screaming and yelling like fiends, blowing trumpets and bugles furiously, their horsemen galloping about in a frantic manner, and causing as much noise and confusion as possible." Fortunately for Maude, his regiment was able to repulse the surprise attack.

Returning to Bushire, Outram had a rethink of his plans. He now decided to lead an expedition of almost 3,000 men to Mohammerah, a city on the west bank of the Karun River. Arriving on 24 March, the British encountered particularly strong defences, and so ordered up warships to destroy the Persian batteries. With this achieved, troops were landed, the 78th Highlanders and the grenadiers of the 64th Foot leading the advance in skirmishing order. While approaching the Persian batteries and breastworks, a hot exchange of musket fire took place between the opposing armies until storming parties from the warships were able to land and drive off the Persians, costing the naval men five killed and 18 wounded.

An assault of the Persian camp was made next, the British and Indian infantrymen advancing in columns with artillery and cavalry in support. However, despite having initially been lined up ready to meet Outram's force, the Persians simply vanished, allowing troops under Brigadier-General Henry Havelock to occupy Mohammerah unopposed on 27 March. Total casualties stood at 300 Persians killed or wounded, with the British losing ten killed and 31 wounded.

Although the Battle of Mohammerah had proved a relatively easy victory for Outram, around 13,000 Persian soldiers, again under Khanlar Mirza, had managed to escape up the Karun River to Ahvaz. In pursuit, Outram ordered 300 men of the 64th Foot and 78th

## "THE ENEMY ... APPEARED ALL AROUND US, SCREAMING AND YELLING LIKE FIENDS, BLOWING TRUMPETS AND BUGLES FURIOUSLY"

Highlanders to board three steamers for the journey upriver. The following day, Ahvaz was sighted shortly after daybreak, where the Persian army could be seen drawn up behind a ridge on the right bank. By 10.00am the British troops were ashore, but the Persians suddenly retired to Shushtar, abandoning their supplies.

Captain J. Wray described the unexpected Persian withdrawal from Ahvaz, "With our glasses we saw a large army of 7,000 men, with a perfect swarm of Bakhtyaree horsemen, and five or six guns, retiring from a very strong position, before a body of 300 infantry, three small river steamers, and three gun-boats."

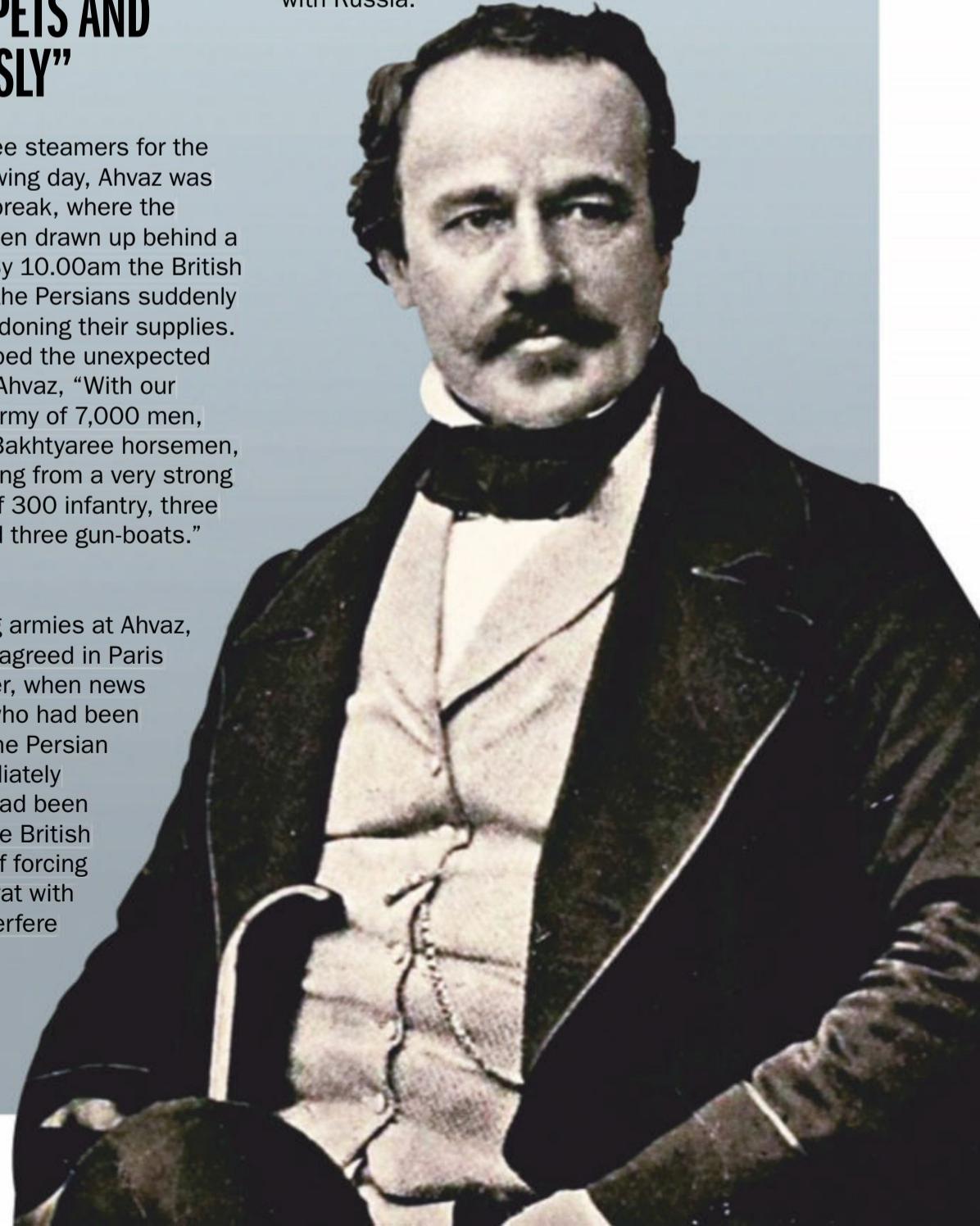
### Treaty of Paris

Unknown to the opposing armies at Ahvaz, a peace treaty had been agreed in Paris on 4 March. A month later, when news finally reached Outram, who had been planning an invasion of the Persian interior, hostilities immediately ceased. Although there had been relatively little fighting, the British had achieved their goal of forcing the Persians to leave Herat with a promise to never interfere

*Right: Lieutenant-General Sir James Outram, who commanded the Anglo-Indian expedition to Persia*

in Afghanistan again. In return, the British withdrew their expedition back to India.

The Anglo-Persian War had been fought in Persian territory, but it had been borne out of tensions surrounding Afghanistan – one of the direct consequences of Britain's Great Game with Russia.



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## D-Day 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

In an address to his forces on the eve of the invasion, Dwight D. Eisenhower, the Supreme Commander of Allied Expeditionary Forces said, **"Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen of the Allied Expeditionary Force. You are about to embark upon the Great Crusade, towards which we have striven these many months. The eyes of the world are upon you. The hopes and prayers of liberty-loving people everywhere march with you."**

As tens of thousands of men climbed into landing craft off the coast of Normandy, they knew that what lay ahead of them was the most heavily defended

coastline in the world, manned by battle hardened troops who had been training for months to repel an invasion force. At their side was the largest combined land, sea and air operation the world had ever seen. The scene was set for the most crucial battle of WWII and a day which would be fought by heroes.

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# Frontline

# ADVENTURERS, EMIRS & GENERALS

The Great Game was influenced by the actions of Afghan rulers and the competition of British and Russian explorers and soldiers

## AYUB KHAN

1857-1914 AFGHANISTAN

### THE 'NATIONAL HERO OF AFGHANISTAN'

The Emirate of Afghanistan emerged in 1823 with the first emir being Dost Mohammad Khan. Dost Muhammad had been able to defeat the British during the First Anglo-Afghan War in 1842 but Afghanistan still remained the main pawn between Britain and Russia during the Great Game.

Dost Mohammad was immediately succeeded by his third son Sher Ali Khan but internecine warfare meant that his elder brothers also ruled. Sher Ali regained the emirate and his son Yaqub Khan succeeded

him in 1879. Yaqub's younger brother was Ayub and he initially served as the governor of Herat. Elsewhere, the British had not forgotten their humiliation during the First Anglo-Afghan War and planned to settle the score.

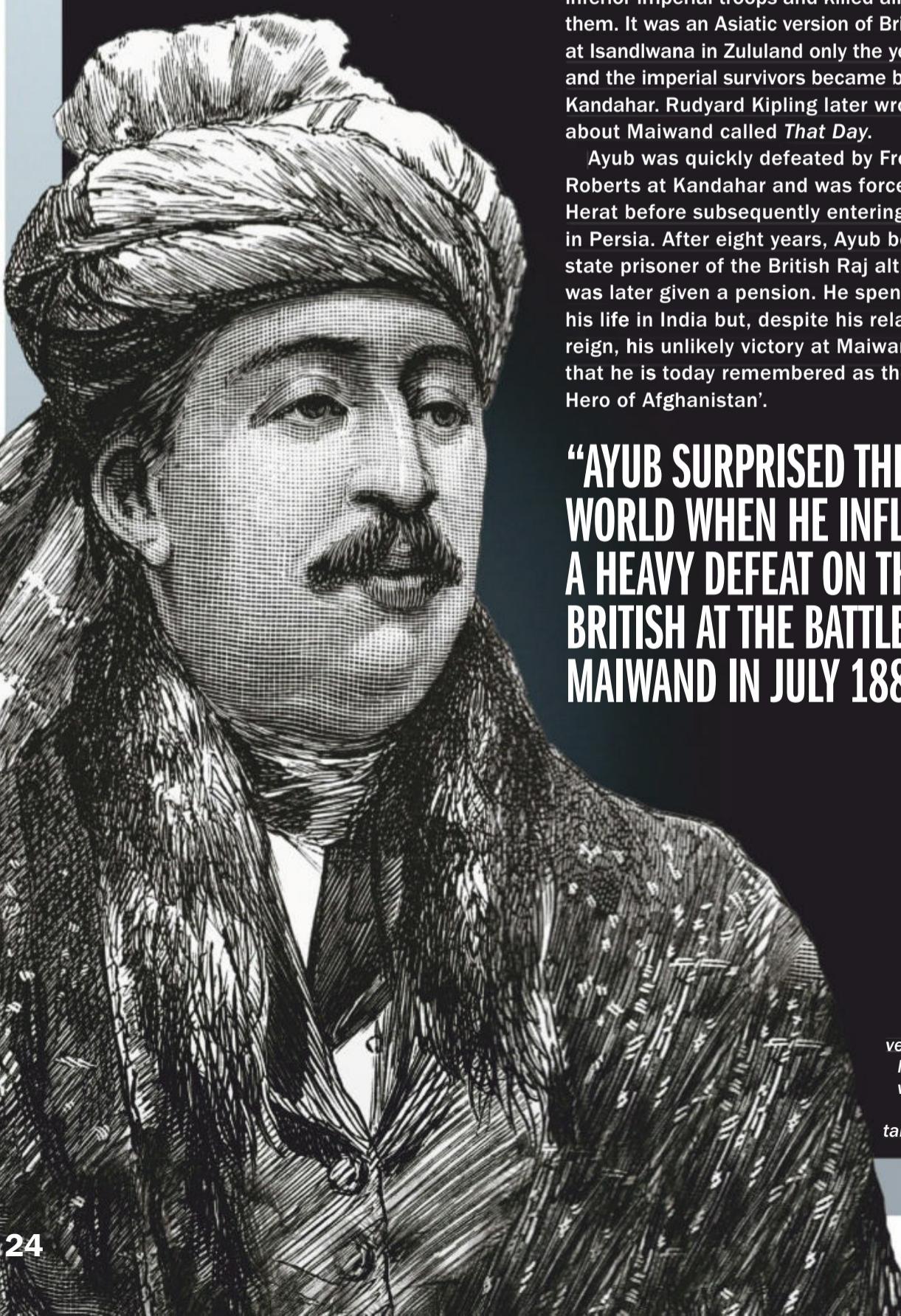
A British diplomatic mission to Kabul ended in the murder of Sir Pierre Cavagnari. This assassination, along with the Afghan tilt towards Russian influence, was used as a pretext for the British to invade once again in 1879. This action started the Second Anglo-Afghan War and the British deposed Yaqub. However, Ayub rebelled and succeeded as emir.

Ayub surprised the world when he inflicted a heavy defeat on the British at the Battle of Maiwand in July 1880. His Afghan force of 25,000 men intercepted the numerically inferior imperial troops and killed almost half of them. It was an Asiatic version of Britain's defeat at Isandlwana in Zululand only the year before and the imperial survivors became bottled up in Kandahar. Rudyard Kipling later wrote a poem about Maiwand called *That Day*.

Ayub was quickly defeated by Frederick Roberts at Kandahar and was forced to flee to Herat before subsequently entering into exile in Persia. After eight years, Ayub became a state prisoner of the British Raj although he was later given a pension. He spent the rest of his life in India but, despite his relatively short reign, his unlikely victory at Maiwand means that he is today remembered as the 'National Hero of Afghanistan'.

**"AYUB SURPRISED THE WORLD WHEN HE INFILCTED A HEAVY DEFEAT ON THE BRITISH AT THE BATTLE OF MAIWAND IN JULY 1880"**

Ayub Kahn was buried in Peshawar but despite his venerated status his mausoleum was vandalised and his tomb tablet was stolen



## ARTHUR CONOLLY

1807-42 BRITISH EMPIRE

### THE MAN WHO COINED 'THE GREAT GAME'

Born in London, Conolly sailed to India at the age of 16 and became an officer in the 6th Bengal Light Cavalry. After a period of sick leave back in Britain he returned to India by land.

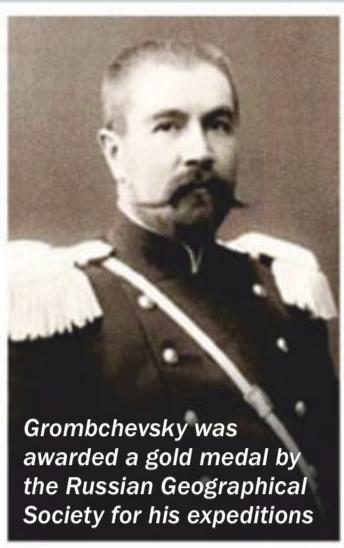
Disguised as an Asian merchant, Conolly passed through Afghanistan and his experiences led him to work as a government agent to curb Russian influence in the country. Intensely religious, Conolly supported the abolition of slavery in Central Asia and hoped to convert the population to Christianity.

He is also credited with coining the term 'The Great Game' when he wrote to Major Henry Rawlinson in Kandahar in 1840, "You've a great game, a noble game, before you. If the British government would only play the grand game – help Russia cordially to all that she has a right to expect – shake hands with Persia ... The expediency, nay the necessity of them will be seen, and we shall play the noble part."

Conolly was captured the following year while trying to rescue Lieutenant Colonel Charles Stoddart in Bukhara. The pair were executed in June 1842 on the grounds of spying for the British Empire.

Conolly wrote from captivity in his last surviving letter to his brother, "We are resolved to wear our English honesty and dignity to the last"





Grombchevsky was awarded a gold medal by the Russian Geographical Society for his expeditions

## BRONISLAV GROMBCHEVSKY

1855-1926 RUSSIAN EMPIRE

### THE CHIVALROUS EXPLORER OF CENTRAL ASIA

Born in what is now Lithuania of ethnic Polish descent, Grombchevsky joined the Life Grenadier Regiment in the Imperial Russian Guard and was transferred to Turkestan. While serving under General Mikhail Skobelev he learned Uzbek, Tajik and Persian, which proved invaluable for his career.

Grombchevsky led many expeditions in the 1880s in Central Asia including Kashgar and the Pamir and Tian Shan Mountains. One of his missions along the Gilgit River with Cossacks alerted the British but Grombchevsky was a gentlemanly soldier.

In 1889, Captain Francis Younghusband was exploring unknown regions of northern Ladakh with Gurkhas when he encamped close to Grombchevsky's camp. Despite the rivalry between Britain and Russia,

Grombchevsky invited Younghusband to have dinner with him. The Cossacks put on a display of their horsemanship while the Gurkhas performed a rifle drill. The two officers talked freely about Great Game intrigues with Younghusband reportedly asking Grombchevsky if the Russians would invade India. They cordially parted company and continued with their expeditions.

Grombchevsky later became a major general but lost all his property in the Russian Revolution and was imprisoned. He escaped to Poland via Japan and wrote many books about his travels.

## WILLIAM ELPHINSTONE

1782-1842 BRITISH EMPIRE

### COMMANDER OF THE DISASTROUS 'RETREAT FROM KABUL'

Born in Lanarkshire, Elphinstone's father was a director of the East India Company. Elphinstone himself joined the British Army in 1804 as a junior officer and by 1813 he was a lieutenant colonel. He commanded the 33rd Regiment of Foot at the Battle of Waterloo and was subsequently made a Companion of the Bath.

After a time serving as aide-de-camp to George IV, Elphinstone commanded a division in the Bengal Army as a major general but he was suffering from ill health. Despite protesting that he was not physically fit, he was ordered to command British troops in Kabul in 1841.

Commanding 4,500 imperial troops and responsible for an additional 12,000 travelling civilians, Elphinstone was unsuited to lead the British force during a vastly deteriorating situation in Afghanistan. He led the infamous retreat from Kabul where his entire army was destroyed by pursuing Afghan fighters. Elphinstone himself was wounded and captured at Jagdalak. He died of dysentery in captivity a few months later.

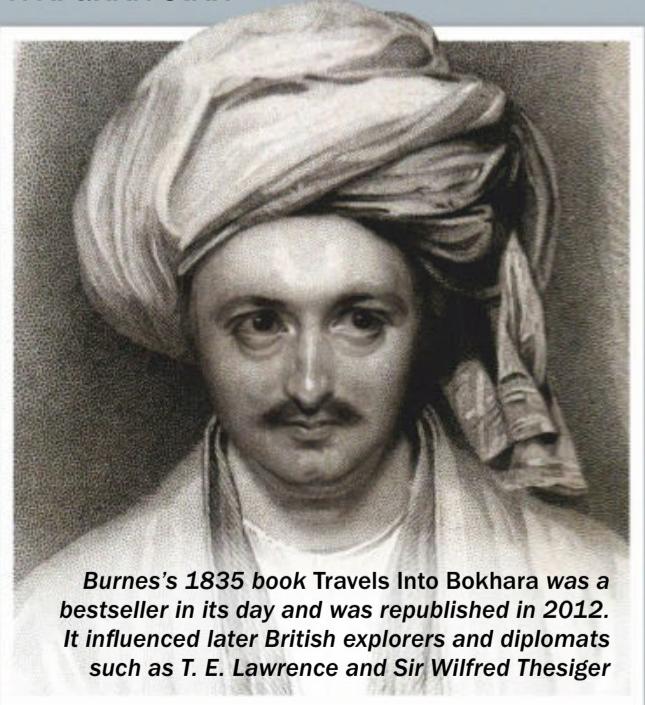


Elphinstone bluntly described his inadequacy to command in Afghanistan as, "Unfit for it, done up body and mind"

## SIR ALEXANDER BURNES

1805-41 BRITISH EMPIRE

### THE FAMED EXPLORER AND POLITICAL AGENT IN AFGHANISTAN



Burnes's 1835 book *Travels Into Bokhara* was a bestseller in its day and was republished in 2012. It influenced later British explorers and diplomats such as T. E. Lawrence and Sir Wilfred Thesiger

Burnes left Scotland for India at the age of 16 and became an officer in the Bengal Army. Having learnt Urdu and Persian, he was appointed as an interpreter and became interested in the history of northwest India. Burnes was intrigued by Afghanistan, which had not been thoroughly explored by the British, and undertook journeys up the Indus River into Afghan territory and the Khanates of Central Asia. A national hero by 1833, he was awarded a gold medal and a fellowship from the Royal Geographical Society.

Knighted in 1838, Burnes became a political agent in Kabul with the 21st Indian Native Infantry. Emir Dost Mohammad Khan initially warmly welcomed him but the British wanted to replace him with the previous Afghan ruler Shah Shujah. Burnes believed Shah Shujah to be an ineffectual leader but nevertheless reluctantly supported the British policy. This would ultimately be his undoing as Shah Shujah's rule was very unpopular. On 2 November 1841, Burnes was assassinated by an angry crowd in Kabul along with his brother Charles and Lieutenant William Broadfoot.

## VASILY PEROVSKY

1794-1857 RUSSIAN EMPIRE

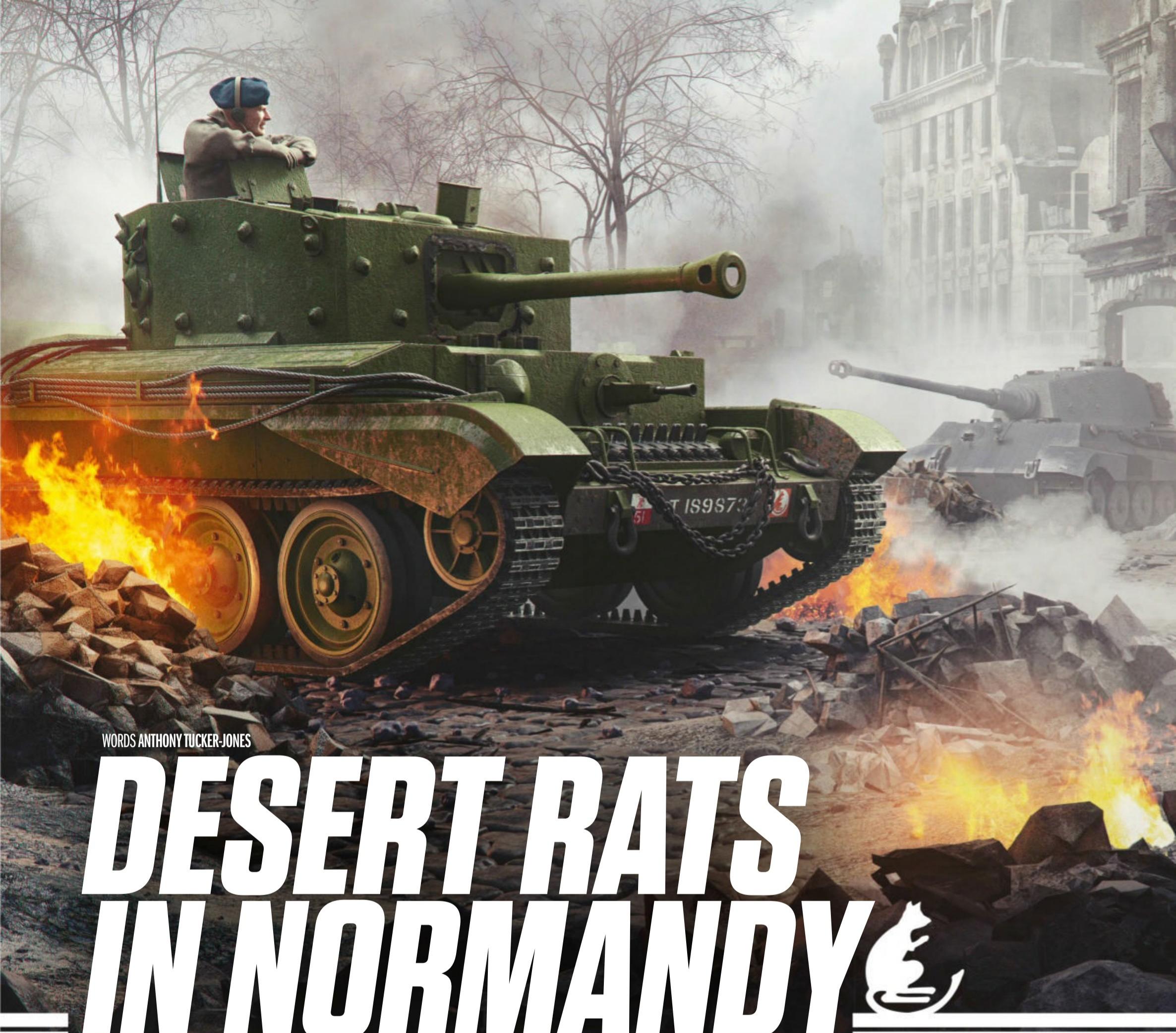
### THE BORODINO VET WHO PROLIFICALLY CAMPAIGNED IN KAZAKHSTAN

Perovsky was the illegitimate son of Count Alexei Razumovsky, the Russian Minister of National Education but he was legitimised under an Imperial Order. After joining the retinue of Tsar Alexander I, Perovsky fought at the Battle of Borodino before the French captured him. After his release in 1814 he was later wounded in the Russo-Turkish War before he became a governor on Russia's southeast frontier.

In 1839 Perovsky led an invasion of the Khanate of Khiva as part of a dual attempt to free Russian slaves and also to extend Russian territory into Central Asia. It was deliberately timed while the British were distracted by the opening phases of the Anglo-Afghan War but the campaign itself was a failure. Perovsky's men travelled through a particularly harsh winter and suffered over 1,000 casualties out of a force of 5,200 infantrymen. The Russians were driven back to Orenburg but Perovsky later led more successful invasions into Khiva and Kokand in the 1850s that resulted in favourable treaties for Russia.

When Perovsky's troops captured the fortress of Ak-Mechet (Kyzylorda) in Kazakhstan, they renamed the fort in his honour





WORDS ANTHONY TUCKER-JONES

# DESERT RATS IN NORMANDY

When Monty's tough 7th Armoured tankers arrived in France he had high hopes, instead they disappointed him

**G**eneral Bernard Law Montgomery made an emotional farewell to the officers and men of his beloved 8th Army in late 1943 at Vasto Opera House, Italy. His place in the history books was firmly secured thanks to his victories in North Africa and Sicily, now he was going on to bigger and better things. He was to command the 21st Army Group tasked with liberating Nazi occupied Europe.

Monty's chief of staff, Major General Francis de Guingand who was to accompany him recalled, "My chief was very quiet and I could see that this was going to be the most difficult operation he had yet attempted. We arrived inside [the opera house] and he said 'Freddie, show me where to go'. I led him to the stairs leading up to the stage. He mounted at once, and to a hushed audience commenced his address to the officers of the army which he loved so well."

However, Monty took with him Major-General "Bobby" Erskine's veteran 7th Armoured Division, the famed Desert Rats. He also took the 50th (Northumbrian) and 51st (Highland) Divisions; along with 7th Armoured they had formed the backbone of the 8th Army. In the days following D-Day on 6 June 1944 Monty was like a prize-fighter before Caen. First he launched a series of right jabs to the west of the city. These were followed by a

head blow with a direct assault and then a very heavy left hook. For the latter, 7th Armoured was ordered to deliver the coup de grâce. Such was its reputation that some thought it was unstoppable.

Field Marshal Erwin Rommel always knew that the battle for Normandy hung on the defence of the city of Caen – more specifically the strategic high ground just to the south and southeast formed by the Bourgébous Ridge. Beyond this was good tank country that would offer the Allies an easy ride to the Seine and Paris. While D-Day had gone remarkably well the American breakout in the west had been slowed by the need to clear the Cotentin Peninsula and secure Cherbourg. To the east, Montgomery with the British and Canadian forces had struggled to evict the Germans from Caen. Frontal attacks and the push to the west had achieved very little. Monty



## DESERT RATS IN NORMANDY

General Sir Bernard  
Law Montgomery,  
Commander of  
the 8th Army

now decided to try and break through Rommel's thick defences to the east of the city, then head for Falaise 20 miles due south.

To achieve this, he massed three armoured divisions, the Guards, 7th and 11th. While the Guards and 11th Armoured were newly arrived, 7th Armoured had been in Normandy since just after D-Day. The tough Desert Rats were long-term combat veterans, as a result great things was expected of them. "The 7th Armoured Division were very experienced fighting men," said Sergeant Harry Ellis with pride, "and we felt we had been selected to take part in the coming invasion in Europe because of our experiences in battle." Instead its first major engagement in Normandy at Villers-Bocage proved a severe embarrassment when its spearhead was mauled unexpectedly by German Tiger tanks.

### Goodbye Shermans

The Desert Rats' morale had been dented when they left Italy without their heavy equipment. "In early November [1944], word got round that we were going home," recalled Sergeant Ellis. "We handed all our guns and vehicles over to the 5th Canadian Armoured Division and made for the Sorrento Peninsula to await a convoy to

*British tank troops were strengthened by the addition of the Sherman Firefly armed with a 17-pounder gun*

## "MANY OF THE VETERANS HAD BEEN AT WAR FOR THREE YEARS AND FOR THEM, UNLIKE A FRESH UNIT, THERE WAS NO SENSE OF ADVENTURE"

take us to Blighty." Many of the veterans had been at war for three years and for them, unlike a fresh unit, there was no sense of adventure.

Furthermore, despite its veteran status North Africa and Italy had not prepared the division for what was to come in France. "Three years in the desert was not the best preparation for the bocage [Normandy hedgerows]," grumbled Sergeant Bobby Bramall of the 4th County London Yeomanry, "we'd had no training for this jungle country ... it was that close and not tank country at all."

Crucially the 22nd Armoured Brigade had surrendered all its Sherman tanks in Italy. When the crews got home they were equipped with the new British-built Cromwell tank. Although faster than the Sherman, it had

the same inadequate 75mm gun and similar armour. This meant it was inferior to German panzers such as the Mark IV, the Panther and the Tiger. Each troop of three Cromwells was beefed up with a Sherman Firefly armed with a 17-pounder anti-tank gun. Some Cromwells were produced as a close support variant armed with a 95mm howitzer, but this was intended to fire high explosives.

Trooper Duce with the 8th Hussars, while not blind to their new tank's shortcomings, was still impressed. "The Cromwell's strongpoints were its speed and reliability," he said, "and once these factors could be taken advantage of, the slow, ponderous enemy would be taken care of in other ways." In contrast Sergeant Bramall was of a completely different opinion: "they were atrocious tanks, fast enough but thin skinned and somewhat undergunned". He commanded a Firefly which he thought was a good tank. However he was alarmed that prior to D-Day, apart from firing their guns, they had no tactical training.

During May 1944 while the division was undergoing its Operation Overlord training the rumour mill circulated that their destination was the Dutch coast. The 22nd Armoured Brigade moved from Norfolk to Ipswich while the others



headed for Tilbury docks in east London. General Erskine gathered his officers in a cinema in Brentwood, Essex to give them a final briefing. The division embarked on 6 June and crossed that night for Normandy in fairly rough seas.

### First casualties

The advance elements of the division came ashore on Gold Beach on 7 June. "We crossed in daylight and hit the beach about mid-afternoon," recalled Sergeant Bertram Vowden with the 8th Hussars. There was no opposition but disturbingly they saw the bodies of dead British soldiers bobbing up and down with the tide. "Once on the hard-packed, wet, shiny sand, the beachmaster directed us to the white taped lanes," recalled Trooper Duce, "which had been swept by the Mineflailers Shermans. What a Godsend they were, and what high calibre men crewed them."

The Rats suffered their first casualties on 9 June after running into German anti-tank guns. The following day those units that had landed were sent

# MEN OF 7<sup>TH</sup> ARMOURED

THE REPUTATION OF THE DESERT RATS WAS SHAPED BY THE OFFICERS AND MEN OF THE DIVISION WHO PASSED THROUGH ITS RANKS



## PERCY HOBART MAJOR-GENERAL

Hobart is famous for creating three armoured divisions. At the start of the war he was sent to Egypt to turn the 'Mobile Force' into what became 7th Armoured in February 1940. On returning to England he raised 11th Armoured followed by the 79th Armoured, equipped with the 'Funnies'. He was not destined to command any of these divisions in combat.

## SIR GEORGE ERSKINE GENERAL

"Bobbie" Erskine led the Desert Rats during their drive from Tripoli to Tunis and their short campaign in Italy. He also commanded them in the wake of Operation Overlord. Following the division's mauling at Villers-Bocage he was sacked. However, Erskine's career did not come to an end as he became CinC East Africa during the Kenyan Mau Mau rising.



## GERALD VERNEY MAJOR GENERAL

Monty appointed Verney as Erskine's replacement and he took command on 4 August 1944 just as the German defence was collapsing. Verney was warned about the Desert Rats' rather slack discipline but he soon had the division "firing on all cylinders" again. He led the Desert Rats until November 1944 when he took over the 6th Armoured Division.

## BOBBY BRAMALL SERGEANT

Bramall was another North African veteran. In Tunisia he and his crew after they had a track shot off were trapped in their tank. He bravely led them to safety during the night. He commanded a Sherman Firefly in 3 Troop, 4CLY in Normandy. For his gallant actions at Villers-Bocage he was awarded the Military Medal.

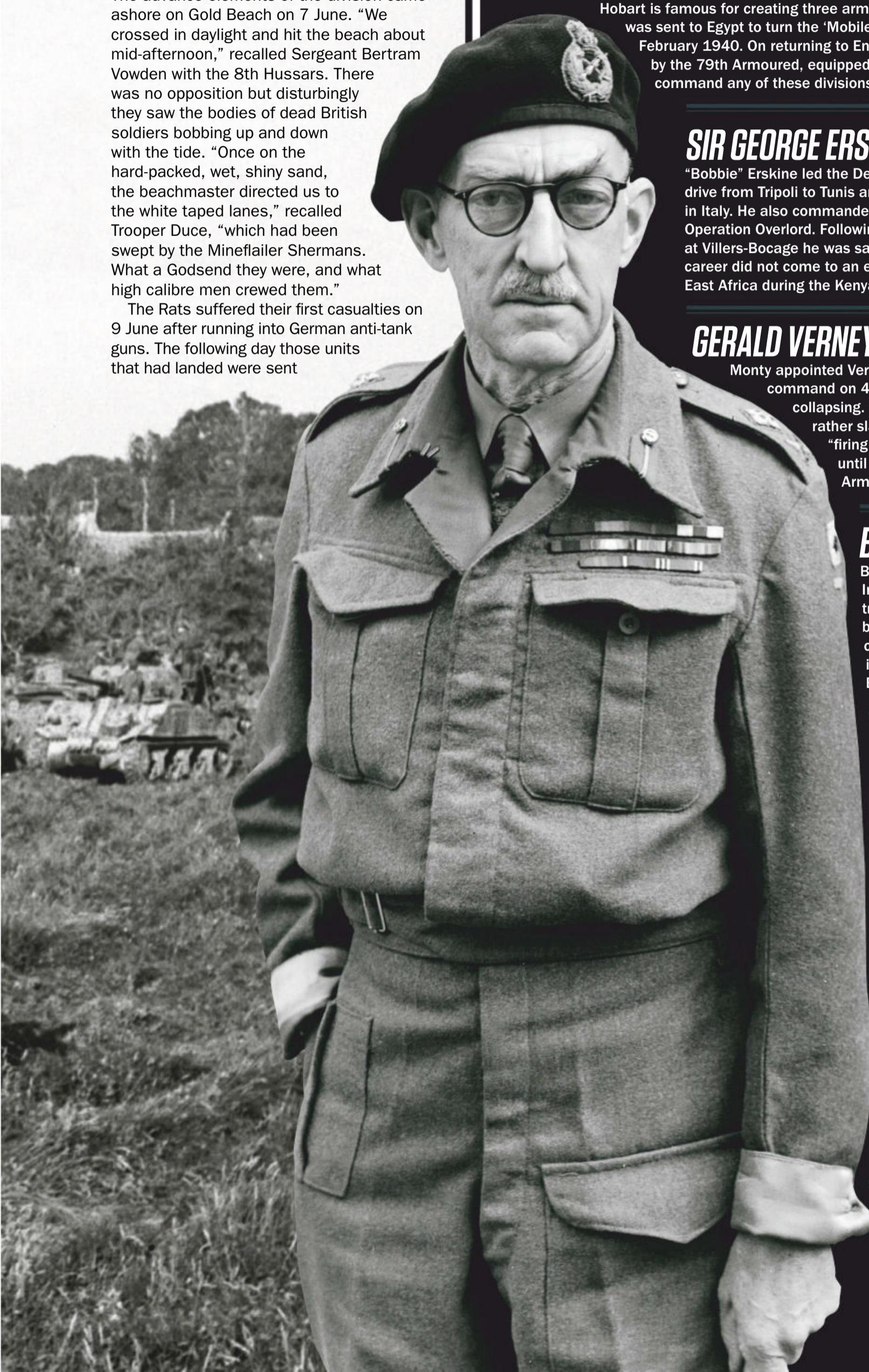
## BILL COTTON LIEUTENANT

Cotton famously set fire to tank ace Michael Wittmann's abandoned Tiger at Villers-Bocage. Using a petrol can and some blankets he and Sergeant Bramall calmly set out to destroy three panzers left in the town centre. As it was raining he used an umbrella as they went from tank to tank dousing them and setting each alight.

## STAN LOCKWOOD SERGEANT

Lockwood with the 4CLY was also a Firefly commander who served with the Desert Rats in Normandy and tangled with Wittmann. He and Bramall were not impressed by the British built Cromwell tanks issued to the Rats, which they felt was no improvement on the American Shermans they left in Italy.

*Left: Major General Sir Percy Hobart, commander of 79th Armoured Division*



# BATTLE FOR CAEN

THE CAMPAIGN FOR THIS VITAL POSITION WAS ACTUALLY A WHOLE SERIES OF OPERATIONS FOUGHT TO THE NORTH, WEST AND EAST OF THE CITY

## PERCH

7-14 JUNE 1944

This was Monty's first attempt to break through German defences to the west of Caen by seizing Villers-Bocage. It failed.

## XXX CORPS

49 DIVISION

50 DIVISION

TILLY-SUR-SEULLES



## XIVII CORPS

276 DIVISION

VILLERS-BOCAGE

II SS PZR CORPS

Landes

Tournay

PZR LEHR

Monts

Noyers

2 PZR DIVISION

EVRECY

R. ODON

Vacognes

Gavrus

10 SS PZR DIVISION

Hill 112

Baron

Mouen

Tourmauville

Grainville

Vendes

Tessel

Cheux

Norreys-en-Bessin

Cristot



## VIII CORPS

## EPSOM

26-30 JUNE 1944

Epsom was Monty's second attempt to break through to the west of Caen by striking toward Evrechy. This also failed.

3 CDN. DIVISION



12 SS PZR DIVISION

2 CD DIVISION

Bretteville-sur-Odon

Airfield

Verson

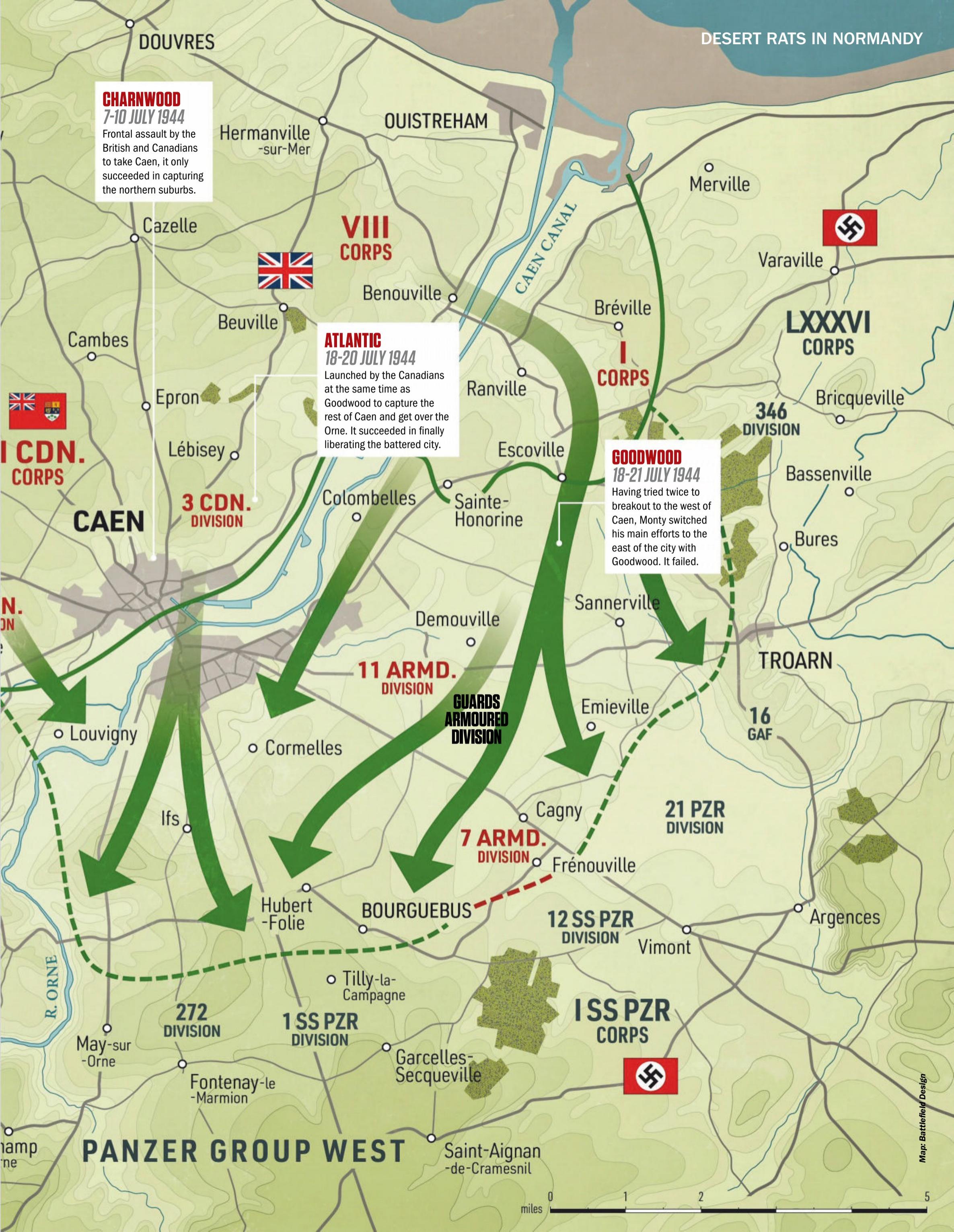
1 SS DIVISION

29 PZR REGT



GREENLINE  
15 JULY 1944

Limited British attack designed to pin down German armour west of Caen prior to Goodwood.





toward Tilly-sur-Seulles. Five miles south of Bayeux they destroyed a Panzer IV. The division was finally in the fight. On 12 June General Erskine was ordered to secure the town of Villers-Bocage and the high ground to the east. Here the division soon became embroiled in heavy fighting with elements of two German armoured divisions, 2nd Panzer and Panzer Lehr plus two companies of powerful Tiger tanks.

The advance guard from 4th County of London Yeomanry pushed through Villers-Bocage at 9.00am on 13 June and reached Point 213 to the northeast. Unknown to them part of 2nd Company from the 101st Heavy SS-Panzer Battalion was in the area under panzer ace SS-Lieutenant Michael Wittmann. The 1st Company under SS-Captain Mobius was on their right. What followed was a disaster for the Desert Rats. Wittmann and a handful of Tigers made short work of 7th Armoured's advance guard.

Sergeant Bramall said, "A Tiger came into the village. First it wiped out the Artillery observer tanks ... poor devils. Then it got to the Recce Troop." This was Wittmann who got between A

and B Squadrons deployed either side of the town. When he reached the western outskirts he was driven off by Sergeant Stan Lockwood's Firefly, which achieved at least one hit but did no damage. On the hill A Squadron were trapped on the road by Wittmann and the other Tigers and systematically knocked out. Once the Fireflies were destroyed the Cromwells were helpless.

J. L. Cloudsey-Thompson watched as A Squadron were just leaving the town when the rear tanks were hit and burst into flames. "Then an armour-piercing shell whizzed between my wireless-operator's head and mine, he said. "It passed so close that although I was wearing headphones, it made me slightly deaf for 24 hours afterwards." His tank was suddenly confronted by a Tiger and alarmingly his 75mm rounds just bounced off it. "Wham! We were hit." Cloudsley-Thompson and his crew bailed out taking shelter under a currant bush. He noted that, "The Tiger drove off undamaged, its commander waving his hat and laughing. Its armour was so thick that none of our Cromwell tanks had been able to knock it out."

At 1.00pm Mobius with eight more Tigers supported by infantry arrived to mop up British survivors between Point 210 and 213. Wittmann likewise reappeared to cause more mayhem. Eventually he was ambushed by B Squadron and two Tigers and a Panzer IV were lost in the town centre. Lieutenant Bill Cotton's Cromwell was only armed with a 95mm howitzer so let Wittmann pass unmolested. His Tiger was then successfully hit and disabled by a British six-pounder anti-tank gun. Sergeant Bramall's Firefly knocked out the second Tiger. The Panzer IV was hit in the rear at close range. However, Wittmann and most of the crews managed to escape on foot to fight another day.

In total this opening battle cost the Desert Rats 20 Cromwells, four Fireflies, three light tanks, 14 half-tracks and 14 Bren carriers. The Germans lost about 15 tanks. A very shaken 7th Armoured was forced to abandoned Villers-Bocage. "We felt bad about getting out," said Sergeant Lockwood. "It made it seem as if it had been such a waste." What was worse was the way they had blundered into the Germans.

*Infantry from 15th Scottish Division supported by Churchills of 7RTR during Operation Epsom*

**"THE TIGER DROVE OFF UNDAMAGED, ITS COMMANDER WAVING HIS HAT AND LAUGHING. ITS ARMOUR WAS SO THICK THAT NONE OF OUR CROMWELL TANKS HAD BEEN ABLE TO KNOCK IT OUT."**



# FAMOUS INSIGNIA

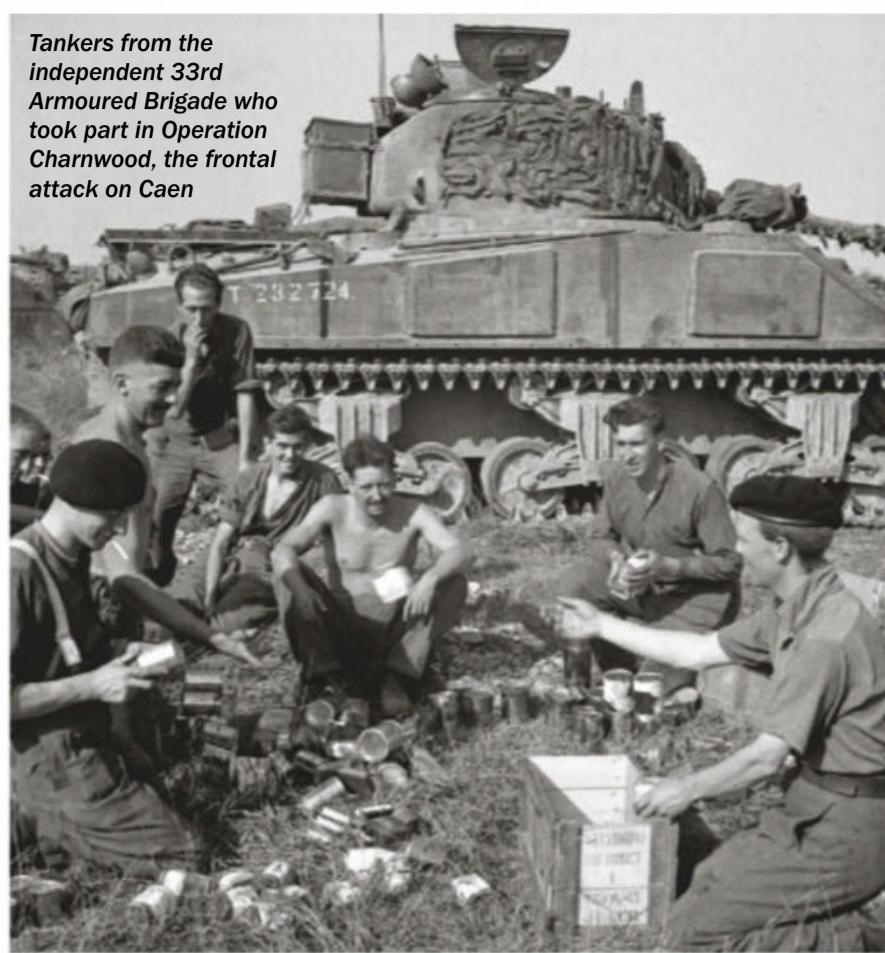
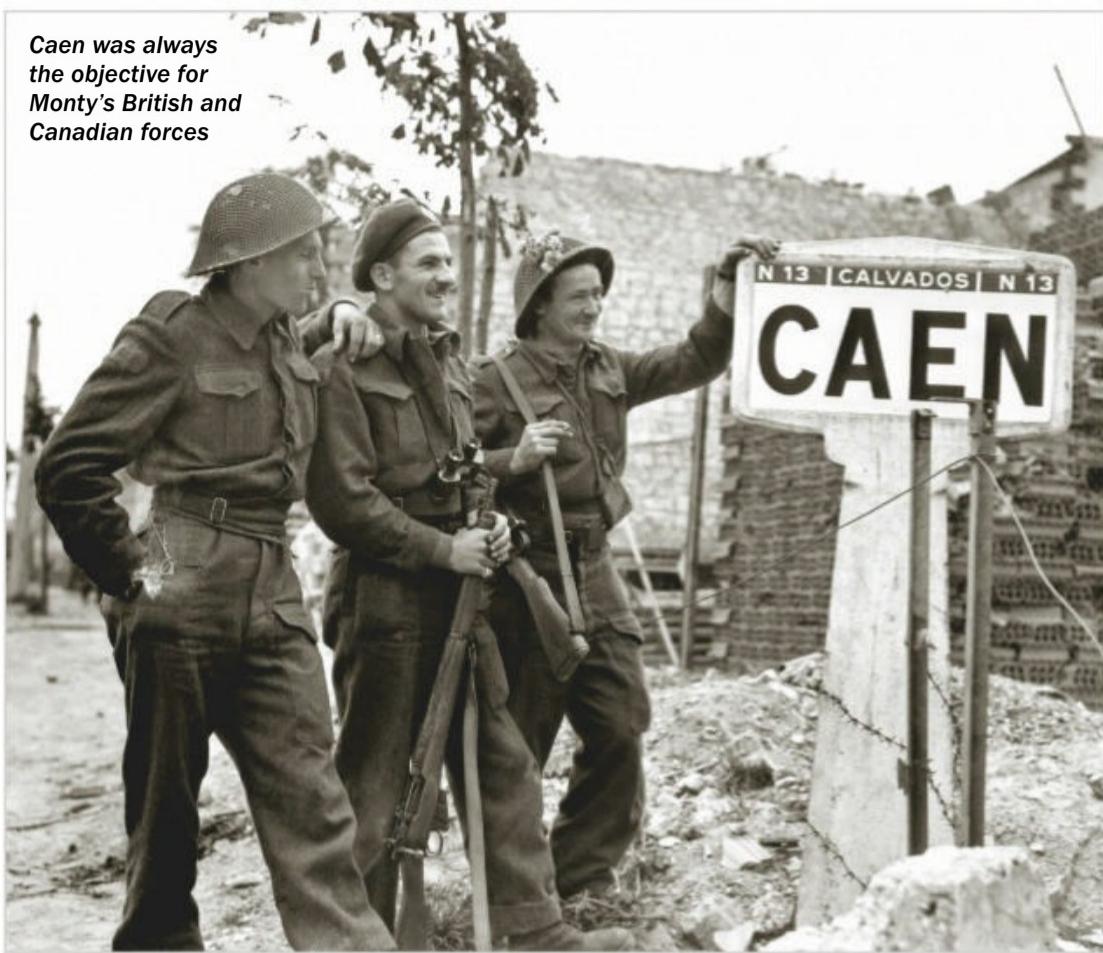
The final version of 7th Armoured's jerboa Desert Rat shoulder patch was issued in December 1943 when the division arrived in England. Unfortunately, the clothing firm made

the jerboa look quite a lot like a kangaroo but the men still had to wear it. The original red rat symbol continued to be used on vehicles. The initial emblem of a white circle on a

scarlet background was inherited from the Mobile Division in Egypt. General O'Moore Creagh then added the Greater Egyptian Jerboa in scarlet to reflect the division's desert role.

*The Cromwell tank memorial to 7th Armoured Division at Sandy in Thetford Forest*





The debacle at Villers-Bocage was a blow to the division's morale and General Erskine knew it was likely to cost him his job. Afterwards the division was deployed east of Caumont. Living in trenches next to their tanks the Rats stayed there until the end of June. In the face of roving Tiger tanks and panzerfaust teams their casualties mounted. The division's first three weeks in Normandy cost it 1,100 casualties. During this time the division made the most of the opportunity to resupply. Jack Geddes, a Sherman Firefly gunner, noted with some irritation, "You would be surprised at the amount of wood, wire and canisters the factory bogs used to wrap a shell or two."

#### Too wary, too canny

The 7th Armoured was not closely involved with Monty's next attempt to breakthrough German defences west of Caen. This time the honour fell to three fresh divisions under 8th Corps that included 11th Armoured. Operation Epsom ran from 26 June to 1 July with the loss of over 4,000 men. The Desert Rats next went into action as part of Monty's controversial Operation Goodwood. Publicly at least the intention was to help the Americans ready for their breakout to the west by tying the panzers in the Caen area and cutting through to Falaise.

Having walked the ground before D-Day, Rommel had made sure that the Bourgébous Ridge was heavily defended and to a great depth. Monty's intelligence assessed Rommel's defences to be three miles deep, in reality they were three times this, consisting of five defensive zones. The first was made up of infantry, then tanks from the 21st Panzer Division, behind these were fortified villages and farm houses, then a gun line honed on the Garcelles-Secqueville woods and the Bourguèbus ridge backed by panzergrenadiers and Panthers from the 1st SS. The last zone held two battle groups from the 12th SS. The gun line on the ridge included 88mm guns, field guns, heavy flak guns and rocket launchers. German tanks and other armoured fighting vehicles totalled around 400.

To convince the Germans that Monty would attack to the west again, on 15 July operations were conducted by the 12th and 30th Corps. To the east the problem Monty faced was that he first had to get his armoured divisions, 11th, Guards and 7th past over the Orne. Although the country to the east was suitable for tanks there were not enough bridges over the river and Caen canal. As a result, the divisions could only advance in columns of brigades one after another. Although General O'Connor's 8th Corps could pitch 870 tanks against 230 panzers he simply could not bring them all to bear at once. In addition, there was a shortage of infantry support. The infantry divisions were deployed on either flank.

**"HAVING WALKED THE GROUND BEFORE D-DAY, ROMMEL HAD MADE SURE THAT THE BOURGÉBOUS RIDGE WAS HEAVILY DEFENDED AND TO A GREAT DEPTH"**

Lieutenant-Colonel Rankin with 7th Armoured and other officers who attended the 8th Corps planning conference came away with a deep sense of gloom. "No-one felt that passing three Armoured Divisions over one bridge could lead to anything except chaos," he said, "and we knew the bulk of the German armour had been concentrated in the area S and SE of Caen." Afterwards Corporal Norman Habetin, serving with 11th Armoured, recalled, "We were briefed for Operation Goodwood, which was going to be the attack to end all attacks."

Notably General "Pip" Roberts, commanding 11th Armoured, had every confidence in his division and the Guards. "They had a view on the battle very much the same as ours," he said,

"they were raring to go and show what they could do." In contrast he characterised 7th Armoured as "a little too wary ... and a little too canny". This did not bode well for the coming operation.

The Germans were stunned by a massive artillery and aerial bombardment before the British tanks surged forward on 18 July. At 7.45am, 11th Armoured, with the British 3rd Division on their far left heading for Troarn, and the Canadian 2nd Division on the immediate right pushing on Colombelles, charged the German defences. Their target was the village of Le Mesnil-Fremental followed by Verrières and Rocquancourt. The Guards on the left met stiff resistance at Cagny. When the lead elements of 11th Armoured cleared the enemy minefields they found themselves exposed. "The Germans knew the exact yardages and they could knock you out quite easily," observed Corporal Bill Scott, "and they did – from both flanks."

#### Late to the fight

In the meantime the 7th Armoured found itself snarled up in the bottleneck caused by congestion on the bridges and was unable to join the battle until the afternoon. "All I remember of Goodwood is sitting for most of one night in a traffic jam waiting to cross a bridge," recalled Private Robert Boulton, "and the non-existent Luftwaffe being very existent." The delay in the Desert Rats' 22nd Armoured Brigade joining the battle did not go unnoticed by General Roberts. He wanted them to take over the space between his 11th Armoured and the Guards. Roberts grumbled that "7th Armoured did not put in an appearance before 5.00pm". Six hours earlier Roberts had met Brigadier "Looney" Hinde commanding 22nd Armoured Brigade. Hinde had not been happy about the battlefield saying, "There are too many bloody tanks here already." Roberts was about to point out that many of these were wrecks but Hinde had gone.

Once across the Orne the Desert Rats came into contact with the enemy at Cuverville. The

# TRIGGER HAPPY

The Desert Rats' expenditure of ammunition during the Normandy battles was not surprisingly very heavy. For example, the Sherman Fireflies averaged 3,250 rounds a month, 4.2in mortars 1,313, .303 rifle ammunition some 76,575. Around 300 tons of ammunition had to be resupplied every day along with 150 tons of petrol. This was a major logistical undertaking with the supply lorries being regularly shelled and shot at by the Germans.

SHERMAN FIREFLY



4.2IN MORTAR



.303 AMMUNITION

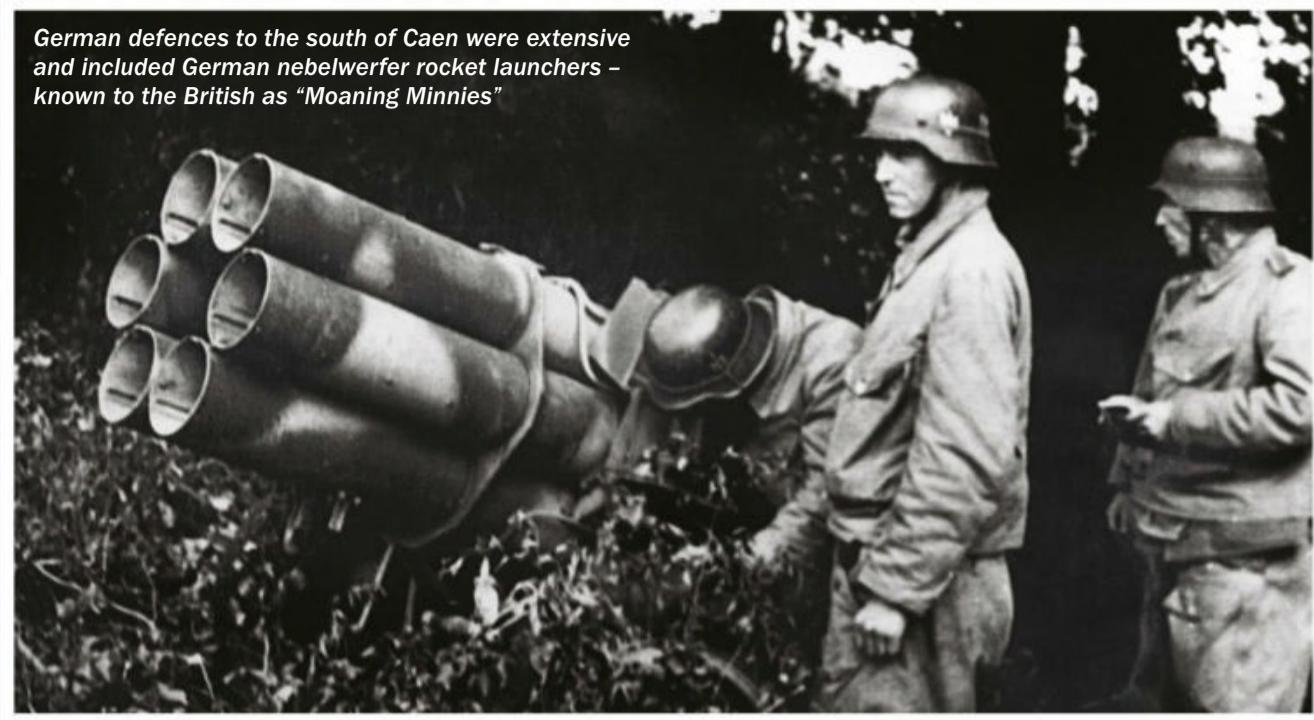
ROUNDS  
PER MONTH**3,250****1,313****76,575**

*The 7th armoured Division gained a tough reputation in North Africa and the nickname the Desert Rats. In Normandy they were branded as "a little too wary"*



## DESERT RATS IN NORMANDY

*German defences to the south of Caen were extensive and included German nebelwerfer rocket launchers – known to the British as “Moaning Minnies”*



5th Royal Tank Regiment destroyed two Panzer IVs but this cost them six tanks and 12 men. In contrast 11th Armoured lost over 100 tanks. The casualties for the day showed that Roberts' division had borne the brunt of the battle having suffered 336 casualties – the Guards lost 137 and 7th Armoured 48.

Roberts was not impressed with the Rats noting rather caustically, "They certainly did not have the same enthusiasm for this battle as ourselves and Guards Armoured Division." This perhaps was a little harsh in light of them being late to the fight, but they did seem to lack drive and aggressiveness.

On the morning of 19 July 5RTR took Grentheville along with 80 prisoners. The 7th Armoured fought its way through Panther and Tiger tanks and their supporting infantry. For the tank crews it came as a shock to see the

battlefield littered with so many knocked out tanks. Major Bill Apsey who was wounded by German mortar rounds recalled, "In the ambulance were two tank boys horrendously burnt, both died on the way back." At 5.00pm 5RTR commenced clearing the Germans from Soliers while 1RTR took Fours. Their objective was the heavily defended Bourguébus ridge.

The following day Captain Bill Bellamy recorded, "On 20 July Ifs, Bras and Hubert-Folie were occupied and patrols pushed on as far as Verrières, held by up to 100 tanks of 1 SS PZ Div, a battle Group of 2 Panzer and 272 Infantry Division." At 6.00pm on 20 July 5RTR took the village of Bourguébus. Remarkably for the loss of just one Cromwell they claimed two Tigers and a Panther. All three panzers were destroyed by a Firefly commanded by Sergeant "Pluto" Ellis. One of them he

knocked out by shooting it through a haystack. The following day they captured two Panthers, set another on fire and destroyed a Tiger without loss. Also on the 20 July the 4CLY got to the Caen-Falaise road near Bras.

On the 21 July the weather broke and there was torrential rain that turned the battlefield into a quagmire. Although Monty had taken Caen and 30 square miles, Goodwood had run out of momentum. The Germans remained entrenched on part of the Bourguébus ridge. In three days of fighting he lost in excess of 400 tanks. The Allies were easily able to replace these, but the tank crews and supporting infantry were irreplaceable. The 7th Armoured alone suffered 200 casualties. "After Goodwood," recalled Private Bill Hinde, "Jerry made a couple of counter-attacks but Div and Army Arty [artillery] made short work of them. He got no where near our positions."

There was to be little respite for the Desert Rats. On 25 July they came under the Canadian 2nd Corps for Operation Spring. This was a continuation of Goodwood that saw another attack toward Falaise. At the end of the month 7th Armoured was committed to Operation Bluecoat which pushed toward Mont Pincon. By mid-August the division was triumphantly heading for the Seine.

Rather unfairly Goodwood was chalked up as a failure. Monty's armoured fist had been fought to a standstill. Strategically though the Desert Rats and the others had contributed to a victory. Goodwood forced the Germans to deploy the bulk of their panzers facing the Allies' eastern flank leaving just 190 tanks facing the Americans. On 25 July 1944 the Americans started Operation Cobra which heralded the German collapse in Normandy.

*Although Caen was liberated during Goodwood much of the city was left in ruins*



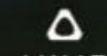
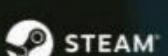
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# JOAN OF ARC'S DOOMED CAMPAIGN

After the Siege of Orléans, the French heroine fought a furiously swift campaign that secured her fame. But despite her initial victories, repeated failures led to her demise

WORDS TOM GARNER

**B**orn as Jeanne d'Arc, nicknamed the "Maid of Orléans" and universally known as "Joan of Arc", France's national heroine was a medieval figure like no other. A crossdressing, teenage peasant girl who claimed to hear divine voices, Joan defied every social convention and turned the tide of the Hundred Years' War in favour of Charles VII of France.

Most of what people know about her life is bookended by her crucial role in defeating the English at the Siege of Orléans and her capture, trial and execution at the age of only 19 in Rouen. This was a short period of only two years but her career in between was remarkable. It encompassed a dizzying array of events: a lightning campaign of continuous victories and a crowning glory at Reims Cathedral before disappointing sieges, standoffs and a humiliating imprisonment. Joan of Arc may be recognised as a saint but as a military presence she was a fascinatingly human blend of success and failure.

## The Road to Orléans

By the time Joan entered the history books the Hundred Years' War was in its ninth decade. The conflict had hollowed out France and the English won continuous military triumphs. By 1420 Henry V had forced Charles VI of France to disinherit his own son and ensured that the kings of England would preside over a dual monarchy.

Not even the premature death of Henry in 1422 and the accession of the infant Henry VI to the two thrones could stop the English conquests. Henry V's able younger brother John, Duke of Bedford ruled as regent of France and won a huge victory at the Battle of Verneuil in 1424. Dubbed as the "Second

Agincourt", Verneuil had secured Normandy and laid the road open for an English advance towards the River Loire.

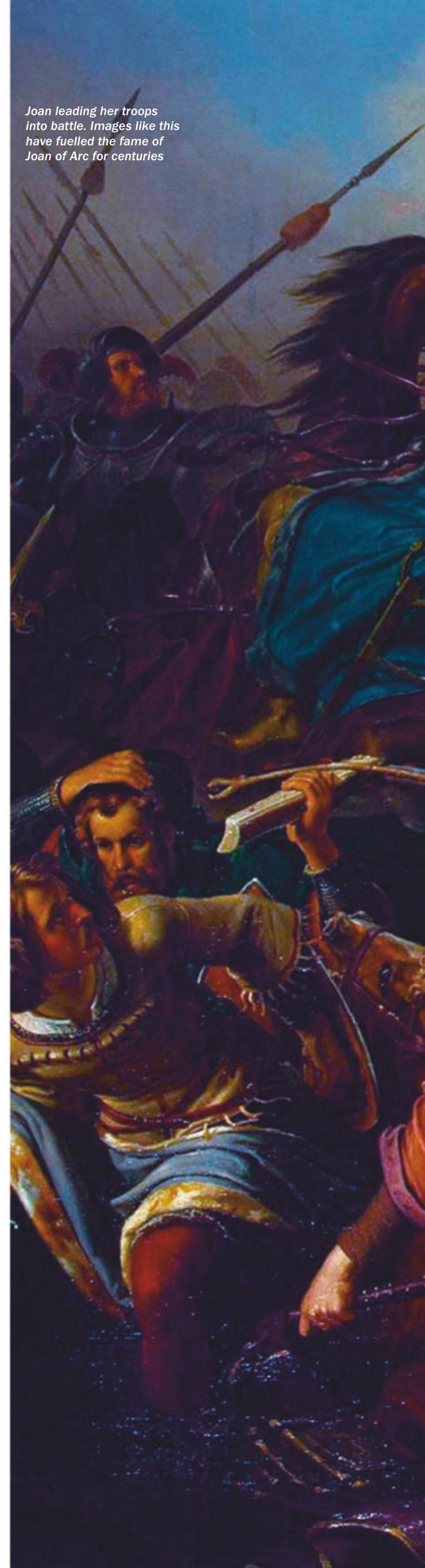
England's success was greatly facilitated by a bitter civil war between the 'Armagnac' and 'Burgundian' cadet factions of the French royal family. Such was the mutual enmity that Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy, allied himself with Henry V following the assassination of his father, John the Fearless. The Anglo-Burgundian alliance continued during Bedford's regency, which left the uncrowned Dauphin Charles (Charles VI's son) ruling a rump Armagnac domain known as the Kingdom of Bourges. Approximately half of France, including Normandy, Paris and Aquitaine, was divided between England and Burgundy along with Breton consent.

This was the messy, violent situation that Joan grew up in but her background was obscure. Born in the Lorraine village of Domrémy in around 1412, her father was a farmer and minor village official. Although she was illiterate, Joan was highly pious and it was her religious fervour that led her to seek a personal audience with Charles at his court at Chinon. In extraordinary circumstances, Joan successfully persuaded the Dauphin to give her military forces to attempt to relieve the city of Orléans from a besieging English army.

Charles trusted her with soldiers despite Joan's background, her habit of dressing like a man and the advice of many of his counsellors. Nevertheless, Joan was also judged to be of sound moral orthodoxy and her arrival was tentatively seen as the beginning of a divine mission to regain France.

Joan grasped the opportunity and she was kitted out with a specially made suit of armour and a distinctive white banner. On 22 March

*Joan leading her troops into battle. Images like this have fuelled the fame of Joan of Arc for centuries*



**"IN EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES,  
JOAN SUCCESSFULLY PERSUADED THE  
DAUPHIN TO GIVE HER MILITARY FORCES TO  
ATTEMPT TO RELIEVE THE CITY OF Orléans  
FROM A BESIEGING ENGLISH ARMY"**

## JOAN OF ARC'S DOOMED CAMPAIGN

1429 she dictated a "Letter to the English" that displayed a powerful voice, "King of England, and you, duke of Bedford, who call yourself regent of the kingdom of France ... submit yourselves to the king of heaven. Restore to the Maid, who is sent here by God ... all of the fine towns you have taken and violated in France. King of England, if you do not do this, I am the military leader, and wherever I find your men in France, I will make them leave, whether they want to or not, and if they will not obey, I will have them all killed. I am sent here by God ... to face you head to head and drive you out of the whole of France."

Despite the rambling style, Joan's letter was an unambiguous challenge to the highest authorities of the English occupation. As events would prove, she meant every word.

### The Loire Campaign

After arriving at Orléans on 29 April 1429, Joan's appearance boosted Armagnac morale and the defenders began to make offensive assaults against English outlying fortresses. Although she only held her banner, Joan was constantly in the thick of the fighting and remained visible despite being wounded by an arrow. These actions quickly forced the English to abandon the south bank of the Loire and on 8 May they broke off the siege.

Joan had managed to liberate Orléans in a few days at the end of what had been a six-month siege. Unsurprisingly, the Maid's fame spread quickly throughout Europe. In Bruges, an Italian merchant wrote to his father in Venice

that the "maiden shepherdess" appeared to be "another Saint Catherine come down to earth". In Rome, a French bishop declared that Joan "accomplishes actions which appear more divine than human".

Within three days, Joan rode to meet Charles and insisted that he go to Reims for his coronation. This would give legitimacy to his rule but the Armagnacs would have to clear the other English garrisons along the Loire. The preparations took almost a month but Joan used the time to hone her military skills. She became a familiar sight in her plate armour and had already developed a saintly quality to her admirers. One young Armagnac nobleman who met her recounted, "It seemed to me a gift from heaven that she was there, and that I was seeing her and hearing her."

The nearest English garrison from Orléans was Jargeau, which was ten miles upstream. It would be the first location of a dazzling quick campaign that lasted only a week and confirmed that Joan's previous success was no fluke. John II, Duke of Alençon, who was a French prince and Charles's official

commander, now led the mustered army. Nevertheless, it was Joan's charisma that pushed the campaign forward.

The English at Jargeau were commanded by William de la Pole, Earl of Suffolk, who was a prominent noble and a hardened veteran. One of the co-commanders at Orléans, Suffolk led 700 soldiers against 3,000 French troops. On 11 June 1429, the outnumbered English were forced to withdraw behind the town walls before they refused an offer of surrender from Joan. French artillery then battered the fortifications.

On the morning of 12 June, Joan led an attack against the walls despite words of caution from her commanders. As she carried her standard through the town ditch, an English soldier threw a stone that struck her on the head. Despite her injury, Joan rose to her feet and exhorted the Armagnac soldiers forward while English morale broke. Using ladders to climb the walls onto the ramparts, the Armagnacs forcibly entered Jargeau and Suffolk was captured. Joan and her captains took him back to Orléans in triumph where the citizens threw wild celebrations.

The next objective was Meung-sur-Loire, another walled town along the river that also had a large castle and a fortified bridge. The castle acted as the headquarters for Lord Talbot and Lord Scales who had taken refuge there after the retreat from Orléans, but the French decided not to attack. Instead, they seized the bridge and left a garrison before moving on. This left Talbot and Scales isolated in the castle and unable to help their troops at Beaugency.

**"IT SEEMED TO ME A GIFT FROM HEAVEN THAT SHE WAS THERE, AND THAT I WAS SEEING HER AND HEARING HER"**



The earliest image of Joan was drawn by Clément de Fauquemberque as a doodle in the margins of the protocol of the Parisian parliament. It is dated just days after the end of the Siege of Orléans but de Fauquemberque would have had no idea what she looked like



Though often forgotten in the narratives of the Hundred Years' War, the French victory at Patay was just as important as English triumphs at Crécy and Agincourt



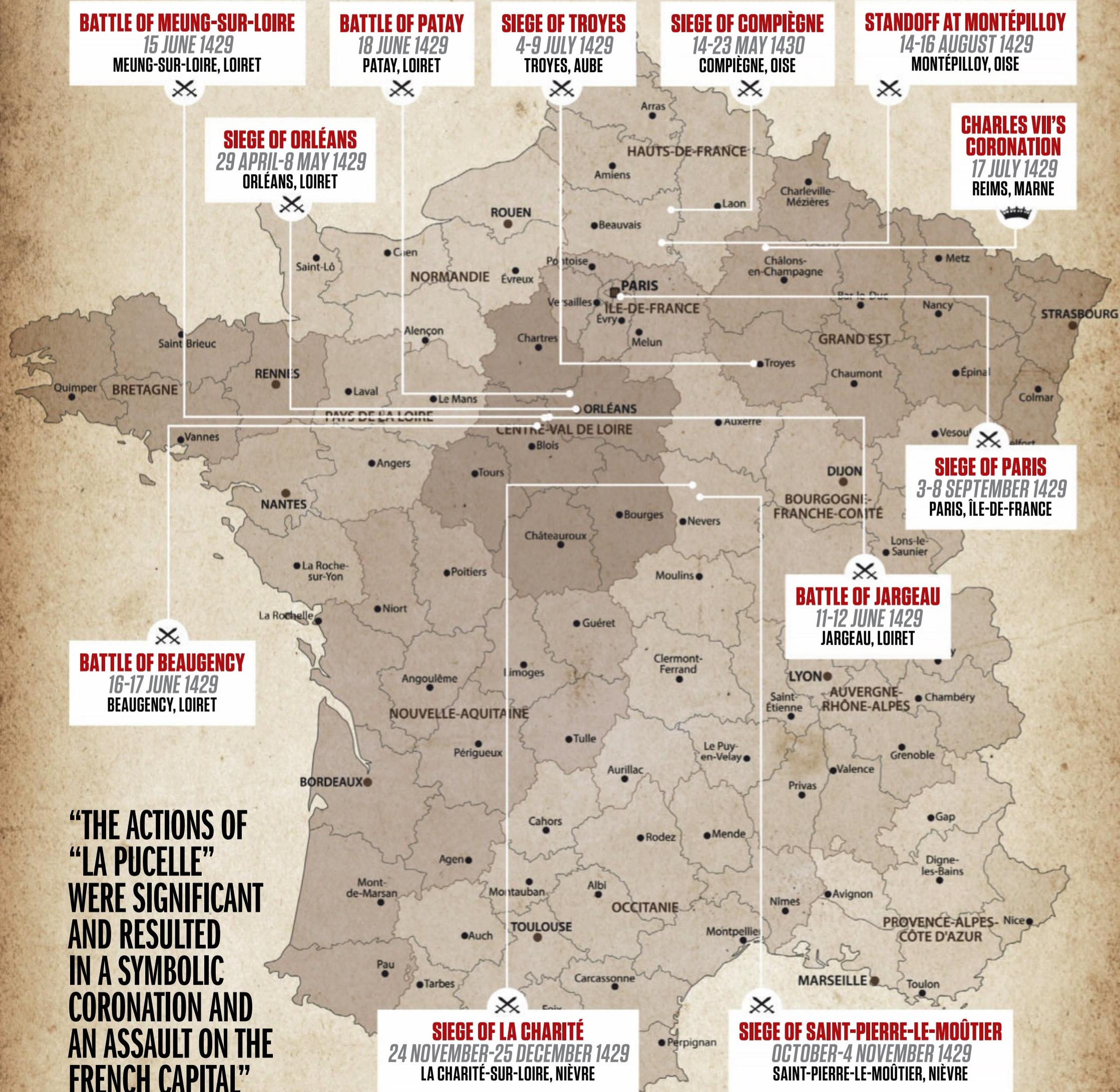
Joan leading her troops against the English Tourelles stronghold at the Siege of Orléans

# A SHORT, SHARP CAREER

DESPITE HER REPUTATION AS ONE OF FRANCE'S MOST FAMOUS WARRIORS, JOAN OF ARC ONLY FOUGHT IN A HANDFUL OF BATTLES IN LESS THAN 13 MONTHS

The majority of the most famous military figures in history require long careers that often span many years and spread over several countries. Joan of Arc was an exception in that her battlefield experiences were short-lived and fought in a relatively small area of central France. Between April 1429 and November 1430, Joan was involved in approximately one

dozen verifiable engagements including six sieges and five battles. Of the latter, one was merely a standoff with minimal skirmishing while Joan was not even directly present at the Battle of Patay. Nevertheless, the actions of "La Pucelle" were significant and resulted in a symbolic coronation and an assault on the French capital.



## JOAN OF ARC'S DOOMED CAMPAIGN

Unlike Meung-sur-Loire, Beaugency's main defence was an imposing citadel inside the town's walls and Talbot's formidable lieutenant, Matthew Gough, commanded the garrison. It was invested on 16 June and the French were joined by troops commanded by the future duke of Brittany, Arthur de Richemont. This arrival initially caused concerns because Richemont was a renegade soldier who had been pro-Burgundian and was barred from military service by Charles. Joan and the other commanders reportedly made him swear an oath to faithfully serve the Kingdom of Bourges. The combined force then bombarded the town walls and the English retreated inside the castle.

At the same time, the Armagnacs sighted an army of some 4,000 men near Meung-sur-Loire. Commanded by Sir John Fastolf, the English were joined by Talbot and Scales but they were too late to relieve Beaugency. Gough was convinced that the numerically superior addition of Richemont's troops rendered his situation hopeless. He agreed to a negotiated surrender with Alençon on 18 June in exchange for a safe passage of the garrison out of Beaugency.

Upon hearing of Gough's capitulation, Fastolf, Talbot and Scales followed suit by leaving Meung-sur-Loire and joined the Beaugency garrison on the northern road. The English were now conducting an orderly retreat from the Loire but Joan was determined that they should be properly pursued. The stage was set for the decisive battle of the campaign.

### Patay

On the same day of the surrender at Beaugency, the English reached the village of Patay, 15 miles northwest of Orléans. Numbering almost 5,000 men after the link up with Gough's troops, the English received news that the Armagnacs were almost upon them. Several hundred of these soldiers were longbowmen and Fastolf drew them up in a defensive position. This was a classic tactic that had previously worked with spectacular results, but not on this occasion. Before the archers could fully hammer in protective sharpened stakes, a lone stag burst out of a nearby wood. As it ran through the archers' position, the English began shouting which alerted the advance Armagnac riders.

This vanguard consisted of approximately 1,500 men-at-arms commanded by Étienne de Vignolles ("La Hire") and Jean Poton de Xaintrailles who immediately attacked. The English were caught by surprise and in the speed of the assault they were unable to loose their usually deadly volley of arrows. The archers were slaughtered and although Fastolf tried to commit reinforcements the Armagnac cavalry charged onto the field and killed all in their path.

A rout followed where the fleeing English were vigorously pursued. It is estimated that over 2,000 were killed by the Armagnacs who themselves lost only around 100 men.

All of the English commanders were captured, including Talbot and Scales, with the exception of Fastolf. He had remained mounted while the others fought on foot and he escaped with a portion of his men across a distance of almost 40 miles to Étampes.

The Armagnac victory at Patay was overwhelming with far-reaching consequences. Not only had the security of the Kingdom

of Bourges been secured but it had also pushed the frontier forward across the Loire. The longbowmen's reputation for battlefield invincibility had been destroyed along with much of the English forces' fighting capability. From now on, the English would fight a defensive war in France and further advances were no longer feasible.

The only peculiarity of Patay was that Joan was not personally present until the battle was virtually over. The Armagnac victory firmly belonged to La Hire and Xaintrailles. Nevertheless her presence throughout the campaign almost certainly gave the Armagnacs the impetus to attack the English with confidence. Jean de Waurin, a Burgundian knight who fought for Fastolf later wrote, "By the renown of Joan the Maid the hearts of the English were greatly changed and weakened, and they saw, as it seemed to them, that Fortune was turning her wheel harshly against them."

### The march to Reims

In only seven weeks since Joan had arrived at Orléans she had immeasurably boosted Armagnac morale and the success of the swift campaign. The extraordinary conclusion at Patay meant that anything now seemed possible. Waurin described this moment, "By these operations, she [Joan] acquired so great praise that it really seemed to all men that the enemies of King Charles would have no power of resistance in any place where she was present, and that by her means the said king would shortly be restored to his kingdom."

Charles greeted the triumphant Joan at Sully-sur-Loire and agreed to make the journey to Reims for his coronation. It would be a journey of many miles through Anglo-Burgundian territory and Reims itself was under Burgundian control. Other Armagnac commanders argued that military operations should focus on attacking English Normandy but Joan insisted that Charles's rule had to be legitimised.

Many more soldiers flocked to the Armagnacs and the royal party set out on 29 June 1429. By 4 July the army had reached Troyes, the location of Charles's disinheritance. Joan ordered its citizens to "submit yourselves in true recognition to the noble king of France" but the people of Troyes refused to open their gates and a siege ensued. It was only when Joan rode out in full view to direct the soldiers for an artillery bombardment that the city surrendered on 9 July.

Châlons-en-Champagne submitted shortly afterwards and by the time Charles reached Sept-Saulx, dignitaries from Reims arrived to offer their obedience. The king entered Reims on 16 July to cheering crowds although their enthusiasm may not have been entirely genuine. Anglo-Burgundian forces could not reach the city in time so the citizens' welcome may have been borne out of pragmatism.

On 17 July Charles was crowned in Reims Cathedral, seven years after the death of his father. At his side was Joan who was dressed in her armour and holding her banner. She knelt at his feet and proclaimed "Noble king, God's will is done" in the presence of her father and brothers who had travelled from Domrémy. This was the pinnacle of her career, Joan had achieved what she said she would do.

*The coronation of Charles VII in the traditional ceremony at Reims Cathedral was the high watermark of Joan's career and an astonishing testament to her determination*



"CHARLES WAS CROWNED IN REIMS CATHEDRAL, SEVEN YEARS AFTER THE DEATH OF HIS FATHER. AT HIS SIDE WAS JOAN WHO WAS DRESSED IN HER ARMOUR AND HOLDING HER BANNER. SHE KNELT AT HIS FEET AND PROCLAIMED "NOBLE KING, GOD'S WILL IS DONE""



## THE REAL FALSTAFF

ONE OF JOAN OF ARC'S ENGLISH OPPONENTS WAS THE PARTIAL INSPIRATION FOR WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S LARGER-THAN-LIFE KNIGHT

Sir John Falstaff is one of English literature's most enduring characters and was considered by Orson Welles to be "Shakespeare's greatest creation". A primarily comic figure (albeit with noticeable depth), Falstaff is a fat, vain and cowardly knight who is openly contemptuous of honourable virtues. He was so popular with Elizabethan audiences that he directly appeared in three of Shakespeare's plays: *Henry IV Part I*, *Henry IV Part II* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*.

In the plays Falstaff's story evolves during the reigns of Henry IV and Henry V with some of Shakespeare's inspiration deriving from the Lollard rebel Sir John Oldcastle. Nevertheless Falstaff's distinctive name was based on Sir John Fastolf, a Norfolk knight whose life bore little resemblance to the Shakespearean legend.

Born in 1380, Fastolf's military career began during the reign of Henry IV in Ireland and although

he was not close to Henry V he did serve at the sieges of Harfleur, Caen and Rouen. Unlike Falstaff, Fastolf was a distinguished knight who fought at the Battle of Verneuil and was the commander of the English victory at the Battle of the Herrings in February 1429.

Nevertheless, Fastolf's reputation was irrevocably stained when he lost the Battle of Patay. This catastrophic defeat saw the capture of most of the English commanders but Fastolf alone escaped. He was suspended from the Order of the Garter and became known as a "cowardly knight". The accusations of cowardice, along with his name, are probably the only factors that connect Fastolf with Falstaff but Shakespeare's creation sealed his legacy. In reality Fastolf was publicly vindicated in the 1440s and restored to the Garter. He died a rich man in 1459 and most of his fortune passed to Magdalen College, Oxford.

*Unlike Falstaff, whose personality is dominated by hedonistic jollity, Sir John Fastolf was described as "a close fisted, litigious and irascible old man"*



Nevertheless, Joan's military work was far from complete because Philip of Burgundy had sworn to defend Paris against Charles only three days earlier. Philip swore his oath together with Bedford and so long as the Burgundians continued their alliance with the English, France's civil war would continue.

### Siege of Paris

The French capital now became the target of Joan's strategy, but she would have to directly encounter Bedford first. The regent entered Paris on 25 July 1429 with 2,750 English troops and reinforced the city walls and artillery positions. The Parisians were fiercely pro-Burgundian and Bedford was secure enough to leave a local garrison while he scouted the surrounding countryside with his English force.

Bedford challenged Charles to open battle in a letter and condemned Joan as a "disorderly and deformed travesty of a woman who dresses like a man and whose life is dissolute". On 14 August, the two armies met at Montépilloy north of Paris and engaged in an unusual standoff for two days.

Bedford's men were terrified of Joan's previous successes and refrained from attacking, while the Maid herself was indecisive. Bedford's fighting reputation was formidable and the Armagnacs did not want another repeat of Verneuil. Joan was recorded as "perpetually changing her resolutions; sometimes she was eager for combat, at other times not". Both armies eventually left Montépilloy with the English marching to defend the Norman frontier and the Armagnacs moving to take the towns around Paris.

Joan and Alençon took Saint-Denis on 26 August and Charles established a camp outside Paris in early September. A siege began on 3 September but the Armagnacs faced formidable defences including fortified towers, gun placements and a huge ditch that surrounded the whole city. Minor skirmishes continued until 8 September when Joan rode to the western Port Saint-Honoré gate. One Parisian described her as a "creature in the form of a woman" and she was refused entry.

The artillery on both sides opened up with Joan again leading from the front with her banner. Missiles rained down on the Armagnacs as they tried to get over the walls but to no avail. At dusk, Joan called to the garrison, "If you do not surrender by nightfall, we will come in there by force ... and you will all be put to death without mercy!" One defender reputedly replied, "Shall we, you bloody tart!" before Joan was shot in the thigh by a crossbow bolt.

Her standard bearer was killed beside her but Joan continued to shout defiance. Nevertheless the other Armagnac commanders ordered a withdrawal and Joan was dragged away to safety. The Siege of Paris was over and Bedford's policy of reinforcing the defences had paid dividends. The engagement had also broken Joan's reputation for divine invincibility and it was her first serious defeat. Charles was forced to call a truce with the Burgundians until Christmas 1429 and one of Alençon's servants wrote, "Thus was the will of the Maid and the king's army broken."

### Capture at Compiègne

The Siege of Paris had been a disappointment for Joan but she quickly recovered from her wound. Despite the truce with the Burgundians, she moved to besiege a pro-Burgundian mercenary called Perrinet Gressard at Saint-Pierre-le-Moûtier. Gressard ran an unofficial fiefdom from La Charité-sur-Loire and Joan and Charles d'Albret moved to crush him. At Saint-Pierre-le-Moûtier, she once again led her troops forward in front of the town walls and the town surrendered on 4 November 1429.

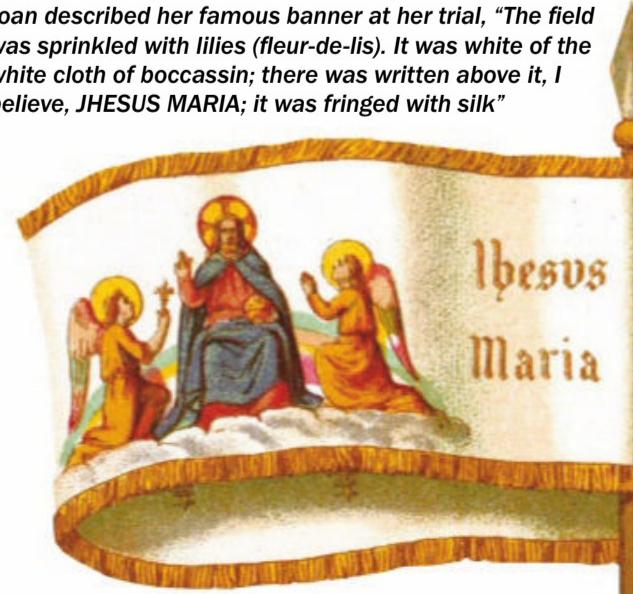
With her reputation partially restored, Joan moved on to La Charité. Between November and December 1429, Joan's forces besieged the fortified town for a month in winter conditions. A shortage of supplies hindered the Armagnac progress and they were forced to abandon the siege at Christmas. It was a disheartening end to Joan's remarkable year of campaigning but she was rewarded for her efforts. At her request Charles declared that the village of Domrémy was exempt from paying taxes and she and her family were granted the status of untitled nobility.

This gift was Joan's last personal high point as a temporary truce was agreed with the English shortly afterwards. For an active young woman, Joan was given little to do for months and she even wrote a threatening letter to Hussite dissidents in Bohemia. Nevertheless, once the truce ended Joan eagerly rejoined the fray in May 1430. An Anglo-Burgundian force had laid siege to Compiègne and Joan decided to repeat the success of Orléans by leading a relief force. Charles had not officially given her permission to go but Joan still went with Xaintrailles and several hundred volunteers.

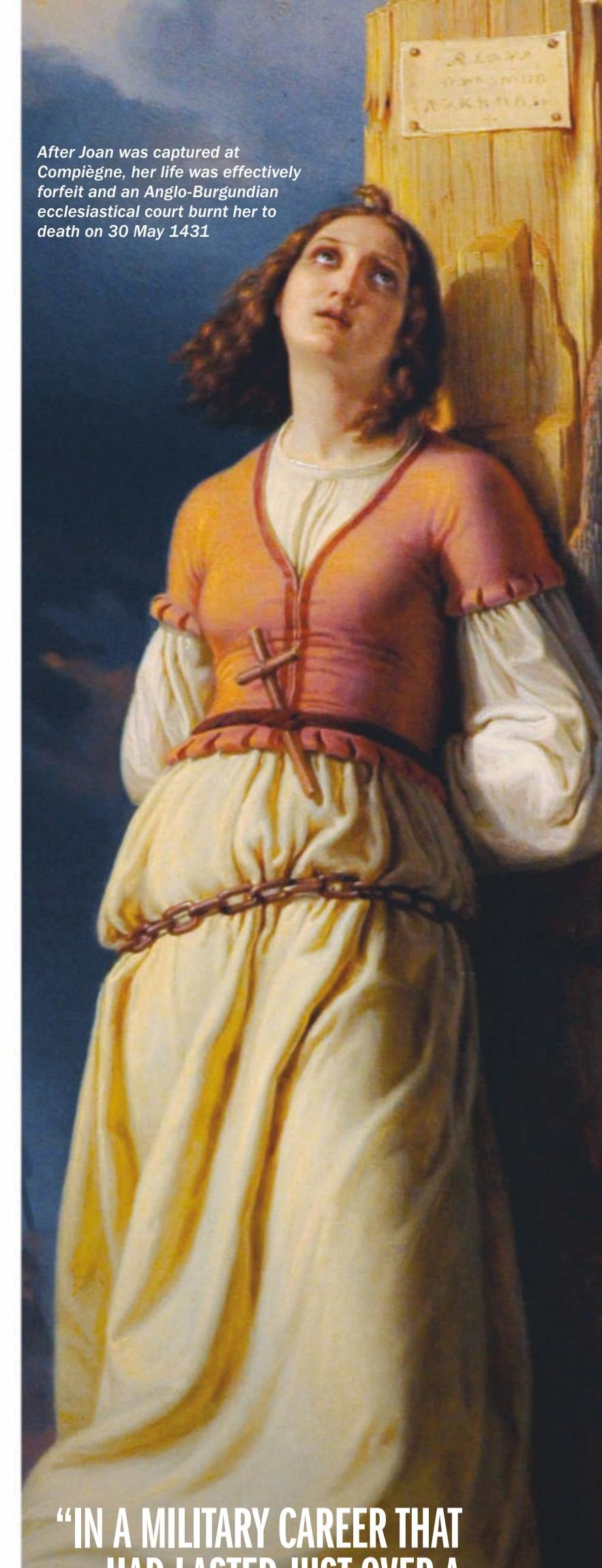
Arriving on 14 May 1430, the small force engaged in several minor actions, including a failed attempt to surprise the Burgundians at nearby Soissons. On 23 May, Joan led an assault against a Burgundian position and initially threw them back. However, English and Burgundian troops appeared and positioned themselves behind her troops. Joan was cut off from the safety of Compiègne's gates but she still urged her troops to fight on. The captain of the garrison was forced to shut the main gate and Burgundian soldiers pressed around Joan until she was roughly thrown off her horse.

Joan acted like a proper knight and formally submitted to the nearest Burgundian officer but her soldiering was at an end. She was now a prisoner and after being sold to the English her life would end a year later after an astonishing but deeply flawed trial. Nevertheless, in a military career that had lasted just over a year, Joan of Arc had turned the tide of the Hundred Years' War against insurmountable odds with sheer determination and above all, courage.

*Joan described her famous banner at her trial, "The field was sprinkled with lilies (fleur-de-lis). It was white of the white cloth of boccassin; there was written above it, I believe, JHESUS MARIA; it was fringed with silk"*



After Joan was captured at Compiègne, her life was effectively forfeit and an Anglo-Burgundian ecclesiastical court burnt her to death on 30 May 1431



**"IN A MILITARY CAREER THAT HAD LASTED JUST OVER A YEAR, JOAN OF ARC HAD TURNED THE TIDE OF THE HUNDRED YEARS' WAR"**

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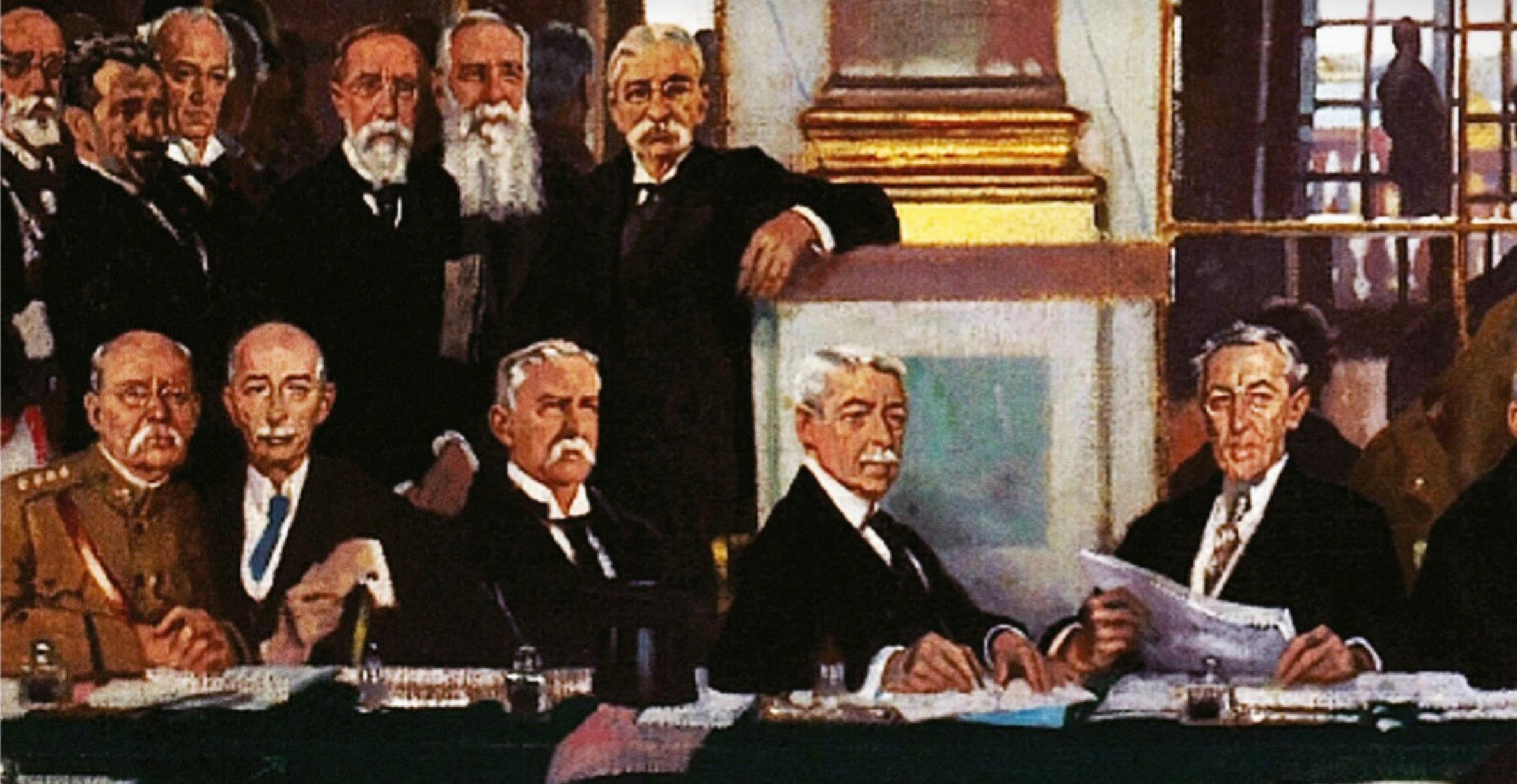
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The Signing Of Peace In  
The Hall Of Mirrors by  
William Orpen

**W**hen The Treaty of Versailles was signed on 28 June 1919 the world was still spinning in a post-war stupor. It had taken over half a year of Allied negotiations for the settlement to be fulfilled, entering completion some seven months after the gunfire had ceased on the Western Front. Poignantly, it was also exactly five years to the day since Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne had been assassinated.

Signed in the gleaming Hall of Mirrors in Paris' Palace of Versailles, the treaty – which is also known as the Treaty of Peace – was inscribed by representatives of the Allied forces along with two German politicians, Johannes Bell and Hermann Müller, and marked the accredited end of the First World War. Consisting of 15 sections and 440 articles, its conditions were mostly discussed among and imposed by the Allied victors, with no participation from the German government.

Many clauses in the treaty were particularly harsh on Germany – the country was stripped of 25,000 square miles of land, the newly-enforced League of Nations mandate handed

its territories over to the Allies, its armed forces were mostly demobilised, and it was held culpable for all damages “as a consequence of [their] aggression”.

This has since provoked much critical debate among historians as to the part that the agreement played in laying the foundation for conflicts that would follow – most notably the Second World War – for both the terms that were laid out and for the deliberate exclusion of Germany in the proceedings. Renowned military historian, author, and battlefield guide Paul Reed agrees that the declaration’s conditions paved the way in the inter-war period. “Some countries, like France, tried to make [the Treaty of] Versailles the punishment,” he says. “In many ways it was: the removal of land, the suppression of the right to have armed forces, the reparation payments – all of this and more created resentment, because it pushed the post-war Weimar Republic into a spiral, allowing extremes of Left and Right to flourish.”

Article 231 of the treaty – known informally as the War Guilt Cause – is one of the most widely-discussed and controversial components of the agreement, due to it requiring Germany to accept both full blame for the four-year

conflict and full responsibility for the restoration and reparation process – which they accepted grudgingly and which, almost certainly, incited much of the resentment that was to follow. The article states, “The Allied and Associated Governments affirm and Germany accepts the responsibility of Germany and her allies for causing all the loss and damage to which the Allied and Associated Governments and their nationals have been subjected as a consequence of the war imposed upon them by the aggression of Germany and her allies.”

“It’s the most interesting part of [the treaty] to me,” continues Reed. “The Allies extracting money from Germany to assist with the rebuilding of the old battlefield areas helped to bring down the economy of Weimar Germany, enable the rise of the Nazis, and, in many ways, what was to be the Second World War.”

At the start of the Allied negotiations, there was a ‘Council of Ten’, with two representing delegates from Great Britain, France, the United States, Italy, and Japan. This became a ‘Council of Five’, with a board formed of each country’s foreign minister and this in turn became the ‘Big Four’, with the leaders of Great Britain, France, the United States, and Italy –



**“ARTICLE 231 OF THE TREATY – KNOWN INFORMALLY AS THE WAR GUILT CAUSE – IS ONE OF THE MOST WIDELY-DISCUSSED AND CONTROVERSIAL COMPONENTS OF THE AGREEMENT”**

## VERSAILLES: WINNERS AND LOSERS

the latter withdrawing for a time, making it the 'Big Three'. They met over 100 times during the six months prior to the treaty being signed, with each country having its own particular aims.

France, the most damaged, intended to place the blame on Germany and make sure that it accepted full culpability for its reparation. French Prime Minister Georges Clemenceau was eager to secure and strengthen his nation – and to do so through the economical, territorial, and military weakening of the German state. He told President of the United States Woodrow Wilson, "America is far away, protected by the ocean. Not even Napoleon himself could touch England. You are both sheltered; we are not." Clemenceau accepted an alliance with Great Britain, in cases of future combat, along with confirmation that the Rhineland – an expanse of area along the Rhine in western Germany – would be demilitarised and occupied by France for the following 15 years.

Compared to its French ally, Great Britain had endured little devastation over the previous four years, though the nation and its public were mostly just as in favour of coercing Germany into fulfilling all damage payments and demobilising them as much as possible, in order to avoid further conflict. Privately Prime Minister of Great Britain David Lloyd George was opposed to this and was keen to both keep Germany as a key trading partner and to maintain a European balance of power between the nations. He was, too, less concerned with the German army and more focused on ensuring that the Royal Navy was the largest naval force worldwide.

Wilson, representing the United States, was an eager advocate for peace, the rebuilding of a strong European economy, and the introduction of the new League of Nations mandate to maintain harmony. He, like Lloyd George, was against severely harsh treatment of Germany and voted against the occupation of German territories.

Although the British public received the treaty with approval, the government and Commonwealth response was varied, with some believing that the imposed conditions from the French were unnecessarily vengeful and greedy, and that the German nation was being forced to sign the declaration without any kind of compromise. Field Marshal Jan Smuts, the soon-to-be South African Prime Minister, publicly denounced the treaty and his disappointment that "a new international order and a fairer, better world are not written in [it]."

In France the population broadly rejoiced and there was much cheering, singing, and dancing outside of the Palace of Versailles upon the treaty's signing, although its agreed clauses would soon backfire on Clemenceau. The extreme Right found it to be too lenient on Germany, with not enough recompense for France's significant loss, and the prime minister was defeated at the following year's elections.

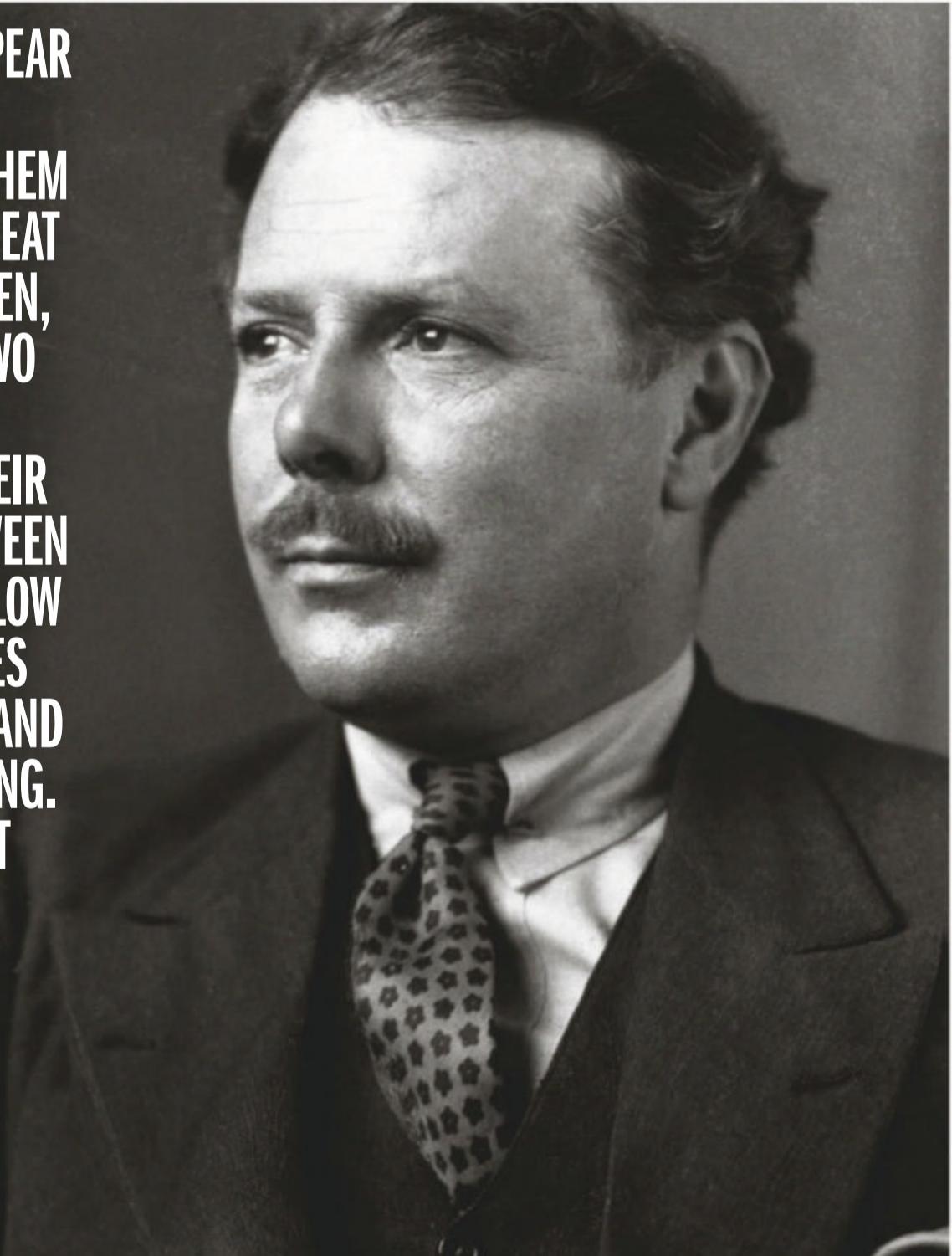
Italy's response to the treaty was entirely

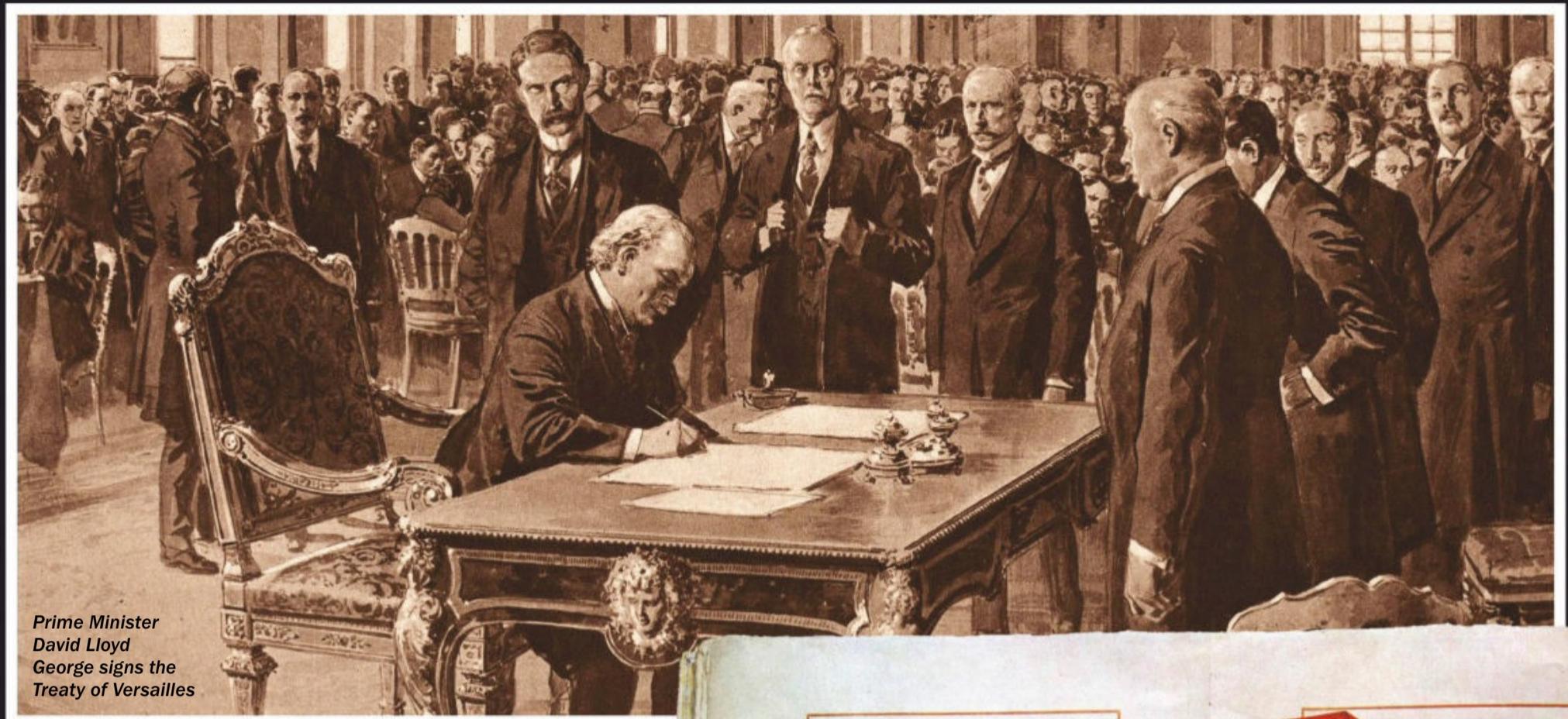
## FROM THE TREATY TABLE

Sir Harold Nicholson, British diplomat and politician, was present at the treaty's signing at the Palace of Versailles in June, 1919. He recounts the Paris Peace Conference in his 1933 publication, *Peacemaking 1919*

"THROUGH THE DOOR AT THE END APPEAR TWO HUISSIERS WITH SILVER CHAINS. THEY MARCH IN SINGLE FILE. AFTER THEM COME FOUR OFFICERS OF FRANCE, GREAT BRITAIN, AMERICA AND ITALY. AND THEN, ISOLATED AND PITIABLE, COME THE TWO GERMAN DELEGATES. DR MÜLLER, DR BELL. THE SILENCE IS TERRIFYING. THEIR FEET UPON A STRIP OF PARQUET BETWEEN THE SAVONNERIE CARPETS ECHO HOLLOW AND DUPLICATE. THEY KEEP THEIR EYES FIXED AWAY FROM THOSE TWO THOUSAND STARING EYES, FIXED UPON THE CEILING. THEY ARE DEATHLY PALE. THEY DO NOT APPEAR AS REPRESENTATIVES OF A BRUTAL MILITARISM. THE ONE IS THIN AND PINK-EYELIDDED. THE OTHER IS MOON-FACED AND SUFFERING.

IT IS ALL MOST PAINFUL."

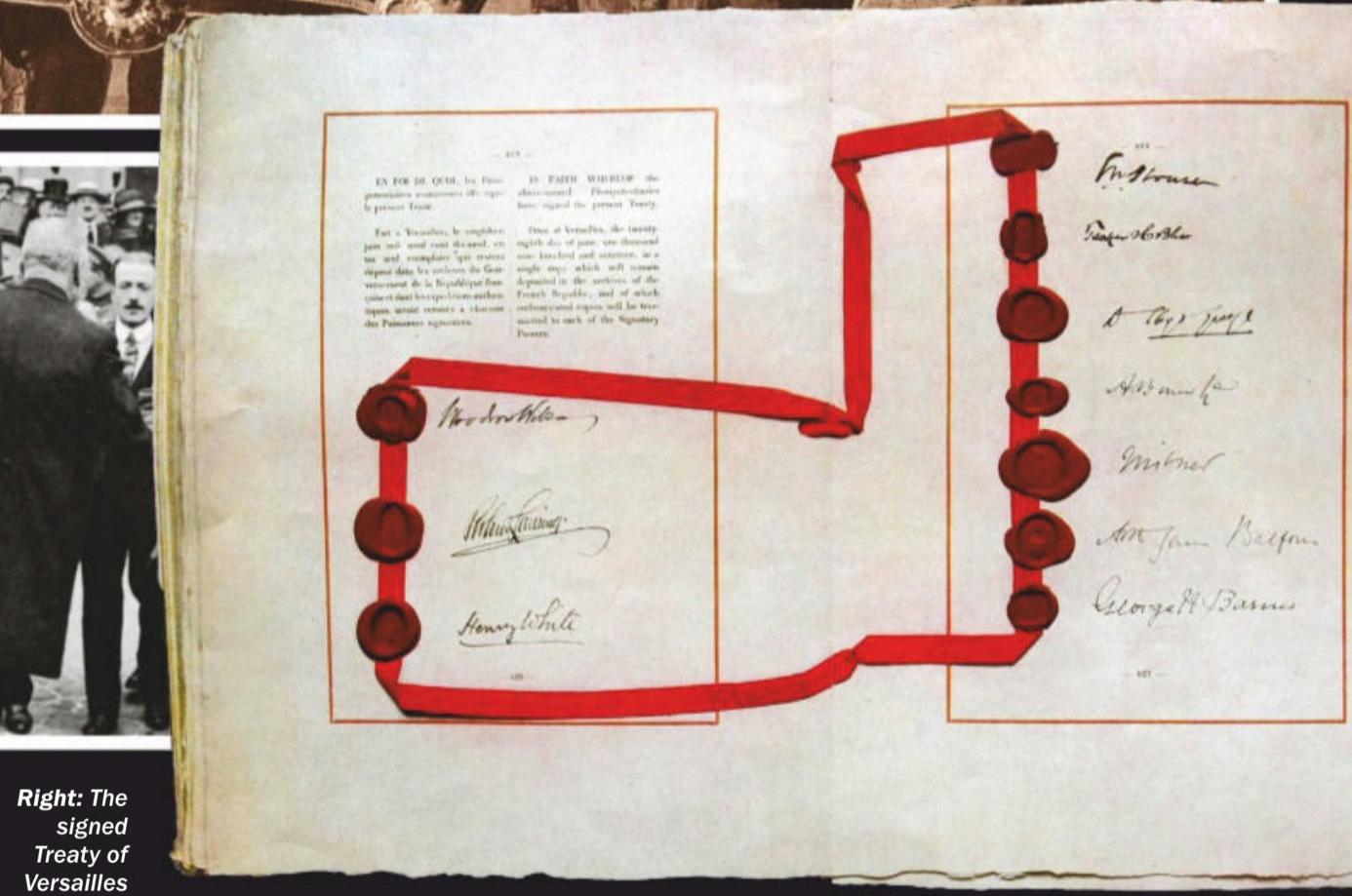




Above: French Prime Minister Georges Clemenceau, US President Woodrow Wilson and British Prime Minister David Lloyd George leaving the Palace of Versailles after signing the peace treaty on 28 June 1919

negative. The country had not been well-supported during the negotiations and was not given requested control of territories, including Dalmatia and Rijeka – both parts of Croatia, and Vittorio Orlando, the nation's prime minister at the time, lost his governmental position only one week before the treaty was signed. The failings of Italy in the discussions and the implications it held preceded the imminent institution of Benito Mussolini's dictatorship only a few years later – a reign that would, in turn, serve as inspiration for Adolf Hitler's totalitarian regime.

"Hitler was able to weaponise Versailles," says Reed. "With it, he was able to show how Germany had been unjustly, harshly treated and how, by agreeing to it, the 'traitors' of the Weimar period had 'betrayed' Germany. If you create an underdog, create resentment, people will fight back. It created the perfect world for extreme politics to develop and take hold. Versailles created the perfect storm of a country punished and allowed men, like Hitler, to step into that political void and motivate people to want to seek 'justice'."



Right: The signed Treaty of Versailles

Germany's Foreign Minister Ulrich Graf von Brockdorff-Rantzau was particularly opposed to the treaty's outcome. To the 'Big Three', he said, "We know the full brunt of hate that confronts us here. You demand from us to confess we were the only guilty party of war; such a confession in my mouth would be a lie." German politics united in its denunciation of the treaty, referring to it as the 'Diktat', due to its imposition upon their nation and Philipp

**"VERSAILLES CREATED THE PERFECT STORM OF A COUNTRY PUNISHED AND ALLOWED MEN, LIKE HITLER, TO STEP INTO THAT POLITICAL VOID AND MOTIVATE PEOPLE TO WANT TO SEEK 'JUSTICE'"**

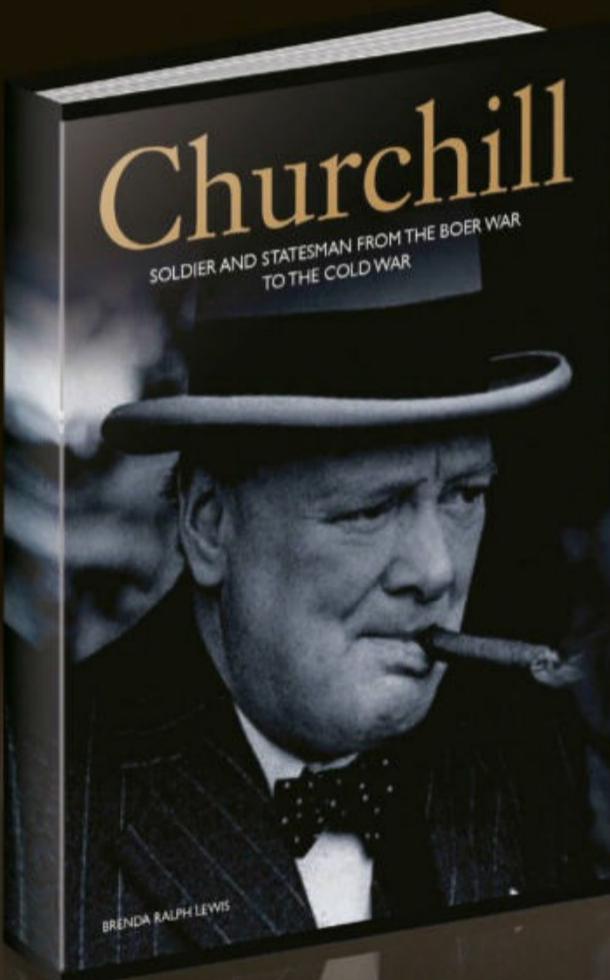
Scheidemann, the government official elected<sup>1</sup> to sign on behalf of Germany prior to the introduction of Bell and Müller, resigned rather than be the signatory.

Following this, a coalition government was formed underneath Gustav Bauer and, though many still publicly condemned it, the Weimar National Assembly voted in favour of signing the treaty – believing that they wouldn't be able to sustain another Allied attack – with 237 votes against 138. Those who supported the treaty were regarded as 'traitors' to the German nation and to have given cause to their ultimate defeat in the conflict. This, in turn, instigated domestic unrest and riots – and undoubtedly facilitated the political unrest that was to follow.

"In retrospect, the treaty was too harsh on Germany," Reed says. "Its army had to be curtailed, but the treaty went too far; the French wanted revenge. What Versailles proved is that if you punish a nation and force it to its knees, it creates the perfect conditions for resentment and the desire to forcibly settle the unjustice of such an arrangement – which is exactly what Europe witnessed 20 years later."

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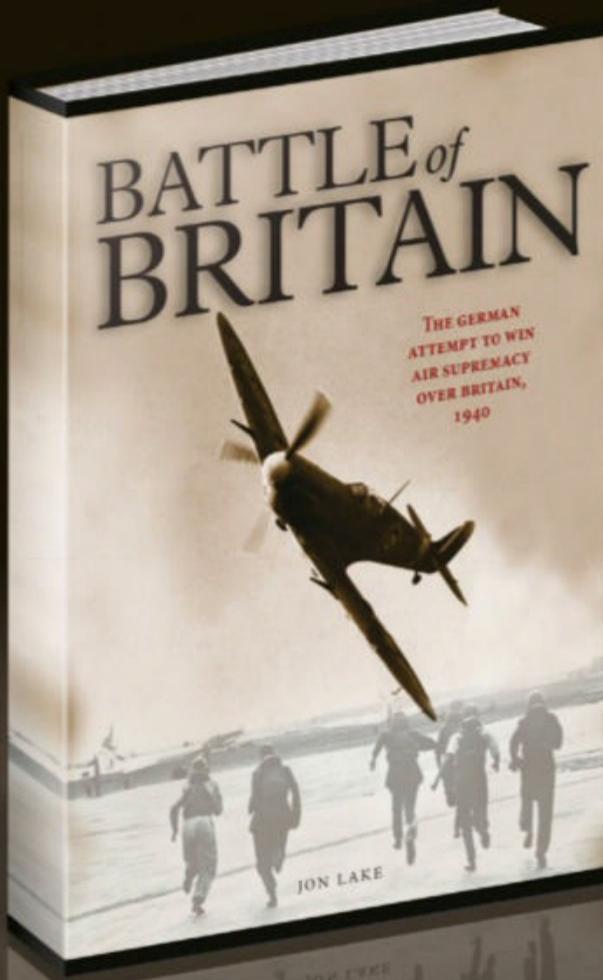
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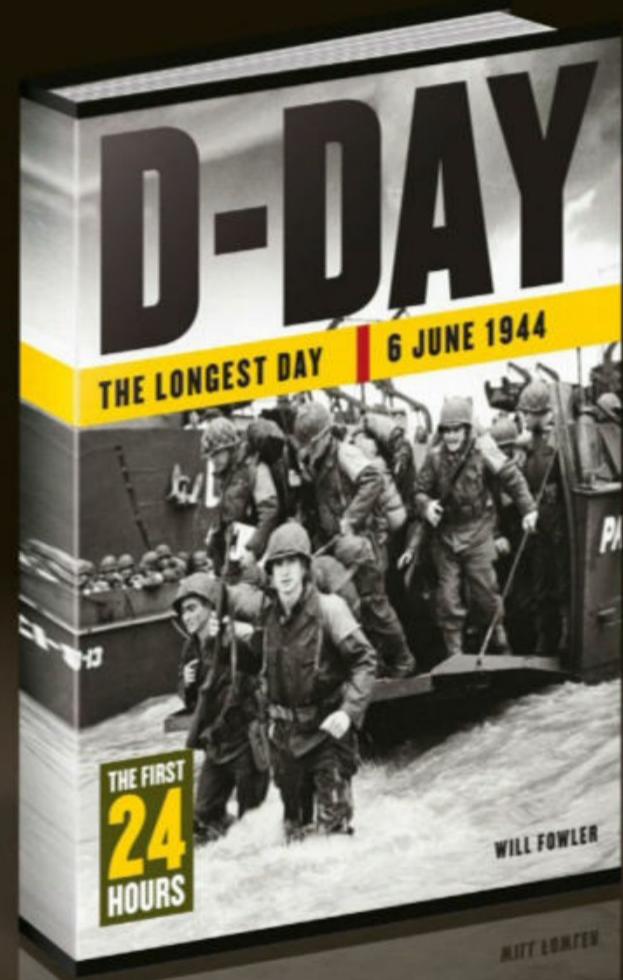
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The 20 July Plot remains among the most famous and disastrous attempt on the Führer's life, with thousands tortured and executed in its aftermath. But were the plotters white knights or fascist opportunists?

# HITLER'S ASSASSINS

WORDS JON TRIGG

In July 1944 most of Europe and huge swathes of the Soviet Union still lay under the Nazi jackboot, but Rome had been liberated, the Anglo-Americans were grinding the Wehrmacht to bloody bits in Normandy, and in the east the Red Army was liberating White Russia and advancing into Poland. Germany was facing disaster, and after multiple failed attempts the anti-Hitler resistance was forced into one last throw of the dice. The 20 July bomb plot, Operation Valkyrie, was launched – assassinate Hitler, destroy the Nazi leadership, install a new government – and then, perhaps, negotiate a peace and end the war – they failed, and Hitler took Germany down to destruction.



*Hitler, Mussolini  
and senior Nazis  
inspect the wrecked  
conference building  
after the bomb blast*

# THE STORY OF THE JULY BOMB PLOT IS THE STORY OF THOSE WHO LED IT

With most of the Nazis' civilian opponents in concentration camps, in exile, or already dead, the responsibility for the attempt would mainly fall to members of the military – the same soldiers whom Hitler had unleashed on the world almost five years previously. These men weren't card-carrying members of some highly-organised clandestine organisation, but a loose federation of monarchists, conservatives, devout Christians, and even a few naked opportunists desperately seeking to avoid the hangman's noose they had earned in the war.

## CLAUS PHILIPP MARIA JUSTINIAN SCHENK GRAF VON STAUFFENBERG OBERST – COLONEL

### THE OFFICER WHO LED THE PLOT & PLANTED THE BOMB THAT FAILED TO KILL HITLER

A Swabian aristocrat – Schenk ('cup-bearer') and Graf ('count') were hereditary titles – von Stauffenberg was born in 1907 into Germany's military, landowning caste. Joining the army in 1926, he took part in the invasions of Poland, France and the Soviet Union, before being transferred to Tunisia in late 1942.

Badly wounded in 1943 during an air attack – he lost his left eye, right hand and two fingers of his left hand – he spent months convalescing before joining the staff of the Ersatzheer, the Replacement Army responsible for training soldiers for the front. Members of the anti-Hitler resistance had previously tried to recruit him, only to be rebuffed, but his experiences in North Africa made him believe that Hitler would lose Germany the war, and therefore had to be gotten rid of. Placing himself at the epicentre of the conspiracy, he attended Hitler's daily conference at his Wolf's Lair headquarters near Rastenburg. There, he armed a bomb hidden in his briefcase and placed it as close to the dictator as he could, before excusing himself and returning to Berlin with his ADC, Oberleutnant Werner von Häften.

Launching Valkyrie, success turned to ashes when Hitler announced his survival on the radio. After a short firefight in Army Headquarters, von Stauffenberg and other leading conspirators were arrested. In an attempt to cover up his own involvement, Friedrich Fromm – the chief of the Ersatzheer – ordered them executed immediately. A makeshift firing squad shot von Stauffenberg in the courtyard, but not before von Häften threw himself in front of his boss to shield him from the first salvo. Von Stauffenberg's last words were "Long live sacred Germany!".

FATE

EXECUTED BY FIRING SQUAD IN THE EARLY HOURS OF 21 JULY 1944



## LUDWIG AUGUST THEODOR BECK GENERAL OBERST – COLONEL-GENERAL

BECK RESIGNED AS CHIEF OF THE GENERAL STAFF IN 1938, AND WAS DESIGNATED PRESIDENT AND HEAD OF STATE IF THE PLOT SUCCEEDED

A First World War veteran, Beck was an early supporter of the Nazis and their policy of German rearmament, even appearing as a witness for the defence in a 1930 trial of three Army officers accused of Nazi Party membership – something explicitly banned at the time. Rising to become head of the General Staff in 1935, he continued to support Hitler until 1938, when he thought the dictator's proposed invasion of Czechoslovakia would lead to a war Germany wasn't ready for yet.

Resigning his post, he was placed on the retirement list, only to become a focal point for anti-Hitler conspirators. Other leading plotters such as Carl Goerdeler, Hans Oster and Henning von Tresckow, were frequent visitors to his modest apartment in Berlin's Lichtenfelde

district, and he accepted the offered role of provisional head of state after a successful coup. His role in Valkyrie itself was to speak to senior military commanders, throughout Germany and across all fronts, to reassure them that the dictator was indeed dead, that they should arrest and disarm the SS in their own areas, and that he as the leading figure in the coup would safeguard their positions with the new administration.

After Hitler's radio broadcast ruined the whole plan, he was arrested with von Stauffenberg and the rest in the army's Bendlerblock headquarters. Knowing Fromm of old, he asked for permission to commit suicide rather than face execution. Fromm agreed, and Beck put a pistol to his own head. Failing to kill himself, an NCO delivered the coup de grâce.

FATE

ARRESTED IN THE EARLY HOURS OF 21 JULY 1944, FAILED SUICIDE ATTEMPT – FINISHED OFF WITH A BULLET TO THE HEAD



## CARL FRIEDRICH GOERDELER FORMER MAYOR OF LEIPZIG

GOERDELER WAS THE LEADING CIVILIAN INVOLVED IN THE PLOT, AND WOULD HAVE BECOME CHANCELLOR IN THE NEW GOVERNMENT

Born in 1884 in Posen (modern-day Poznan in Poland), Goerdeler was a deeply religious man who served on the Eastern Front in the First World War, before becoming a career civil servant after Germany's defeat. Enraged by the enforced ceding of territory to establish the Polish state, Goerdeler became a member of the ultra-nationalist German National People's Party (DNVP) and mayor of first Königsberg and then Leipzig. He was also appointed as the Reich's Price Commissioner – a post designed to help keep a lid on the much-feared spectre of inflation.

After the Nazis came to power, Goerdeler increasingly found himself caught between two stools: supporting Hitler's bellicose demands for the recovery of the eastern lands, but opposed to massive German rearmament and the surge in inflation it was causing. Goerdeler was also horrified by the Nazis' anti-Jewish policies, believing them to be in direct contradiction of his profound Protestant faith – the 1933 Nazi boycott of Jewish-owned businesses was lifted in Leipzig on his personal intervention. Resigning in 1937, he was drawn into the conspiracy through his contact with the likes of Beck and Hans Oster.

Often travelling abroad, he became a conduit to foreign intelligence services and, despite his deep dislike of von

Stauffenberg was the chief civilian

in the resistance movement,

advocating a restoration

of the monarchy

and designated as

chancellor-in-waiting.

Ordered arrested

before the 20 July

assassination

attempt, he

managed to

evade capture

until August.

During

interrogation

– he wasn't

tortured – he

revealed the

names of

hundreds of

co-conspirators,

who were then

rounded up and

subjected to the

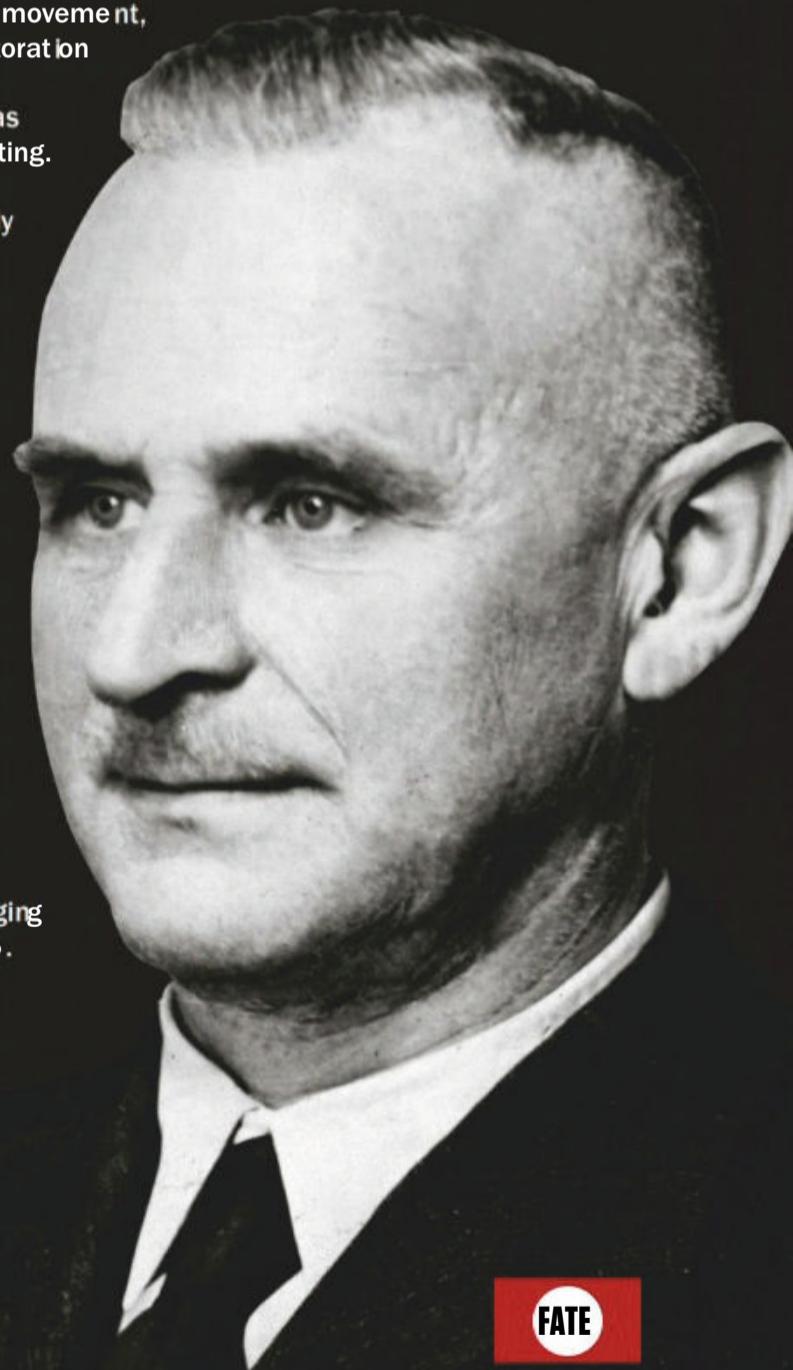
tender mercies

of the Gestapo.

He was finally

executed by hanging

in February 1945.



FATE

ARRESTED ON 12 AUGUST 1944 IN MARIENWERDER (MODERN KWIDZYN, POLAND) WHILE VISITING THE GRAVE OF HIS PARENTS, HE WAS TRIED, CONVICTED AND SENTENCED TO DEATH. HANGED AT PLÖTZENSEE PRISON IN BERLIN ON 2 FEBRUARY 1945

## HENNING HERMANN KARL ROBERT VON TRESCKOW GENERALMAJOR – MAJOR-GENERAL

DESCRIBED BY THE GESTAPO AS THE 'PRIME MOVER' BEHIND THE PLOT

An aristocrat like his fellow conspirator von Stauffenberg, von Tresckow served with distinction in World War I, becoming the youngest lieutenant in the army in June 1918. Swiftly rising through the ranks, he participated in the 1940 invasion of France and Barbarossa the following summer, being instrumental in Hitler's adoption of Manstein's controversial plan to defeat France by an armoured thrust through the Ardennes to Sedan. Disgust at Nazi atrocities in the Soviet Union, and fear of the military-industrial might of the USA, turned him from a Hitler enthusiast into a member of the resistance.

Closely tied to the likes of Beck and Goerdeler, he made several failed attempts to assassinate Hitler, including putting a bomb hidden in a bottle of Cointreau on board the dictator's private plane. In the autumn of 1943 he used his position to revise the existing army contingency plan on how to deal with a coup, Operation Valkyrie became the vehicle by which the plotters would remove the Nazis from power and establish a provisional government under army protection. Sent back to the staff of Second Army on the Russian Front, von Tresckow entrusted implementation of Valkyrie to von Stauffenberg.

While in the east – and awaiting the planned assassination – von Tresckow signed an order authorising the deportation to the Reich of tens of thousands of Polish and Ukrainian children for forced labour. On hearing of the Plot's failure – and knowing his part in it would soon be discovered – he drove out to a nearby forest and faked a partisan attack, firing his pistol into the air and then blowing himself up.



COMMITTED SUICIDE ON 21 JULY 1944 AT KRÓLOWY, MODERN-DAY POLAND, BY DETONATING A GRENADE UNDER HIS OWN CHIN



## ERICH HOEPNER GENERALOBERST – COLONEL-GENERAL

HOEPNER WAS A DISTINGUISHED PANZER OFFICER WHO BECAME PARTY TO THE PLOT FOLLOWING HIS SACKING BY HITLER IN 1942

The son of a general, Erich Hoepner served in World War I and initially supported the Nazis' policy of rearmament, but feared Hitler's threatened attack on Czechoslovakia in 1938 was a step too far, and so joined the nascent resistance. Regardless, he served as a corps commander in the invasions of Poland and France, where he clashed with the Waffen-SS over their atrocities.

Promoted to lead Panzergruppe 4 for the invasion of the Soviet Union, he distinguished himself, only to fall foul of Hitler that same winter by ordering his battered formations to withdraw without the dictator's express permission. Sacked, he was also dismissed from the army – an act he successfully overturned in court. By now an avid anti-Nazi, despite enthusiastically ordering his men to execute captured commissars and communists while in Russia, he was a supporter of the 20 July Plot.

Following his arrest he was offered suicide as a way out but refused – insisting on a trial, where the chief prosecutor Roland Freisler humiliated him by making him wear grotesquely ill-fitting clothes without a belt for his trousers, and refusing to let him wear his false teeth.



ARRESTED IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE PLOT AND TORTURED, HE WAS TRIED, FOUND GUILTY OF TREASON AND HANGED AT PLÖTZENSEE PRISON ON 8 AUGUST 1944. IN COMMON WITH OTHER PLOTTERS HE WAS HUNG USING VERY THIN HEMP ROPE (NOT PIANO WIRE AS OFTEN WRITTEN) TIED TO A MEAT HOOK, WITH HIS AGONY FILMED AT HITLER'S REQUEST



Erich Hoepner shaking hands with Hitler in 1939. He would win glory in Russia before being executed for his part in the Plot

## WILHELM FRANZ CANARIS ADMIRAL

HEAD OF GERMANY'S INTELLIGENCE SERVICE, THE ABWEHR,  
CANARIS WAS THE REICH'S LEADING SPYMASTER

A career naval officer, Canaris served on cruisers and U-boats in World War I before beginning a long involvement with intelligence operations. Semi-retired by 1934, the following year he replaced Conrad Patzig as head of the Abwehr. Hugely expanding the service, he came into conflict with Reinhard Heydrich and his own Nazi Party intelligence service, the SD, although this didn't stop the two of them riding together in Berlin's parks.

Under his command the Abwehr had some early successes in the war, but also some dreadful failures, such as the Dusquesne spy ring fiasco in the United States. Like so many other senior German officers, Canaris was an early supporter of the Nazis, but as the defeats mounted in the east he came to believe that Hitler must be removed to stop Germany losing the war. Canaris turned a blind eye to the activities of his deputy Hans Oster, a leading light in the resistance, and allowed anti-Hitler conspirators to congregate in the Abwehr, but was careful not to become too actively involved himself, offering support without fully committing to action.



FATE

ARRESTED ON 23 JULY 1944, CANARIS WAS SENT TO FLOSSENBÜRG CONCENTRATION CAMP IN BAVARIA, BUT THE NAZIS LACKED CONCLUSIVE PROOF OF HIS INVOLVEMENT IN THE PLOT. KEPT UNDER LOCK AND KEY HE WAS EVENTUALLY TRIED AND CONVICTED AS THE WAR CAME TO A CLOSE. IN A MACABRE FINAL ACT OF HUMILIATION, HE WAS FORCED TO WALK NAKED TO THE GALLows UPON WHICH HE WAS HANGED ON 9 APRIL 1945



## ARTHUR NEBE

**SS-GRUPPENFÜHRER UND GENERALLEUTNANT DER POLIZEI – SS GENERAL AND GENERAL OF POLICE**

A MASS-MURDERING FORMER EINSATZGRUPPE COMMANDER, NEBE SOUGHT TO EVADE JUSTICE BY JOINING THE RESISTANCE

A former soldier, Nebe joined the Berlin police in 1920 before becoming an early member of the Nazi Party and the SS. An able and ruthless officer, he rose to head Germany's criminal police, the Kripo, in 1936 and was involved in the euthanasia of the mentally ill and physically disabled. In 1941 he volunteered to lead one of the extermination squads planned to follow behind the troops advancing into the Soviet Union.

As head of Einsatzgruppe B, he oversaw the murder of almost 50,000 Jews and other 'undesirables', the majority by shooting, but he also experimented with other forms of killing including explosives and vehicle exhaust fumes. Posted back to Germany in late 1941, he took up his police duties again, including heading up Interpol's forerunner – the International Criminal Police Commission. In March 1944, Nebe was ordered to select and shoot 50 of the recaptured 'Great Escape' prisoners-of-war.

Increasingly fearful of his fate following what he thought would be Germany's inevitable defeat, he joined the resistance and became involved in the 20 July Plot. His role was to have lead a 12-man team to assassinate the head of the SS, Heinrich Himmler, but the order never came.

FATE

WENT INTO HIDING ON AN ISLAND IN THE WANSEE LAKE AREA IN BERLIN WHEN THE PLOT FAILED. BETRAYED, HE WAS ARRESTED IN JANUARY 1945 AND EXECUTED IN THE INFAMOUS PLÖTZENSEE PRISON ON 21 MARCH 1945. AS WITH HIS FELLOW PLOTTER HOEPNER, NEBE WAS FILMED WHILE BEING HUNG USING THIN HEMP ROPE TIED TO A MEAT HOOK



*German Panthers prepare to counter-attack in Normandy in 1944. If the Plot had succeeded these men would likely have been transferred east to face the Red Army*



## WHAT IF THE PLOT HAD SUCCEEDED?

PEACE WITH THE WEST, VICTORY IN THE EAST, GERMANY UNPUNISHED?

With Hitler assassinated and much of the rest of the Nazi hierarchy either dead or under arrest, the conspirators had two priorities: establish themselves in power, and turn the war back in Germany's favour.

After broadcasting to the world that the dictator was dead, the plotters' plan was to announce themselves to the nation over the air waves as the new government. Goerdeler would move into the Chancellery and institute his new cabinet, Generalfeldmarschall Erwin von Witzleben would assume command of the Wehrmacht, and Ludwig Beck would become the first president of Germany since Hindenburg's death. The Nazi Party – seen by the plotters as a bacillus within German society – was to be immediately abolished, and any opposition would be ruthlessly crushed. This would not be a democratic revolution – the monarchy would be restored, probably in the form of Prince Oskar of Prussia, and much of the status quo, bar the

Nazi Party itself, would be left untouched until a new conservative constitution could be finalised and brought in.

However the war would not have stopped, and Germany would neither surrender, nor unilaterally order its forces to withdraw home to the Reich. The Holocaust would in all likelihood have ceased, and the camps and prisons would have been filled by unrepentant Nazis and opponents to the new regime.

All efforts would be made to turn the tide of the war. Günther von Kluge would be ordered to seek a ceasefire in Normandy, with the further offer of peace negotiations to the western Allies. That offer to the Anglo-Americans would be an end to the war in the west, and a German withdrawal back within the Reich's 1914 borders. The disputed provinces of Alsace-Lorraine would, however, remain German. Washington and London would also have to agree to the extinction of Poland, Berlin's annexation of huge additional territories in the east, and the German subjugation of eastern Europe.

The fighting in the east would continue, with all the troops freed from battle in the west being transferred to face the Red Army, in an attempt to finally beat Moscow and at least partially win the war for Germany.

*Erwin von Witzleben was in the first group of accused conspirators to be brought before the Volksgerichtshof*

# AN ENGLISHMAN ABROAD

GIANLUCA Barneschi

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as the cold, two o'clock in the morning type.'*

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# OPPOSING FORCES



IMPERIAL ARMY

VS OTTOMAN ARMY

LEADER:

Prince Eugene of Savoy

INFANTRY: 34,000

CAVALRY: 16,000

ARTILLERY: 60 guns

TOTAL: 50,000

LEADER:

Sultan Mustafa II

INFANTRY: Unknown

CAVALRY: Unknown

ARTILLERY: 90 guns

TOTAL: 80,000

Prince Eugene of Savoy

SANJAK OF SEGEDIN (NORTHERN SERBIA) 11 SEPTEMBER 1697

# ZENTA

Prince Eugene of Savoy's Hapsburg army catches Sultan Mustafa II's Ottoman forces by surprise – seizing the chance to strike a fatal blow in the Great Turkish War

WORDS WILLIAM E. WELSH

**S**hortly after dawn on 11 September 1697 a high-ranking Ottoman prisoner named Cafa Pasha was brought before Prince Eugene of Savoy, the commander-in-chief of the Hapsburg Imperial army in war-ravaged Hungary.

Although the Ottoman prisoner initially was tight-lipped regarding the location of Sultan Mustafa II's army, known to be in the vicinity, he quickly changed his mind when threatened with physical harm. The prince declared that if he did not immediately divulge the location of the sultan's army, a group of Croatians standing nearby would hack him to pieces.

Wanting to save his own life, the prisoner began sharing everything he knew. He told the prince that the sultan's army was in the process of crossing the Tisza River just below the village of Zenta. The bulk of the cavalry and the sultan's baggage train had already crossed to the far side of the river, but the foot soldiers had not yet made their way to the east side – leaving them vulnerable to attack.

Eugene knew he had to act quickly to take advantage of the favourable situation. Even though it was the 33-year-old Hapsburg field marshal's first independent command on the Hungarian front, he had no doubt about what he must do. The information gleaned from the Ottoman officer presented him with a golden opportunity to destroy the Ottoman army and break the stalemate in the Great Turkish War.

The prince resolved at once to lead the Hapsburg cavalry to the river crossing, while the infantry and field guns made a forced march to Zenta. It would take most of the day to reach the enemy's location, but Eugene had every intention of attacking before sundown.

## The Long Wars

Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent's victory over Hungarian King Louis II at the Battle of Mohacs in 1526 had led to the Ottoman annexation of two-thirds of Hungary. The

remainder of the country, a buffer strip in the north known as Royal Hungary, remained in the hands of the Hapsburgs. Because Louis, who died fleeing the field, had no successor, the Hapsburgs inherited Hungarian dynastic claims. Sultan Suleiman followed up this great victory at Mohacs by besieging Vienna three years later, however he failed to capture it.

**"THE PRINCE DECLARED THAT IF HE DID NOT IMMEDIATELY DIVULGE THE LOCATION OF THE SULTAN'S ARMY, A GROUP OF CROATIANS STANDING NEARBY WOULD HACK HIM TO PIECES"**

For three centuries, beginning in the mid-15th century until the 18th century, the Austrian Hapsburgs held the throne of the Holy Roman Empire in an unbroken line of succession. Because the archduke of Austria also was the emperor, he could harness the military resources of the empire for his regional war against the Ottomans. The Imperial army engaged against the Ottomans generally included Austrians, Germans, Hungarians, and Croats.

An important battle that would foreshadow the Battle of Zenta occurred in 1664 when Grand Vizier Fazil Ahmed Pasha attempted to reach Vienna through western Hungary. Near the Monastery of St Gotthard on the Styrian-Hungarian frontier, the grand vizier's army was crossing the Raab River when heavy rains raised the river, stranding the janissaries on the north side. Imperial general Raimondo Montecuccoli had hidden his army in the woods north of the river. He launched a surprise attack that wiped

out nearly all of the janissaries save for a few who were rescued by Tatars skilled enough to swim their horses across the flooded river.

Although the Hapsburgs and Ottomans skirmished repeatedly along their frontier after the collapse of the Kingdom of Hungary in 1526, they fought two "long wars" that were characterised by particularly bloody sieges and battles. The first long war, known simply as the Long Turkish War, which lasted from 1593 to 1606, as mostly one-sided in favour of the Ottomans. Conversely, the Hapsburgs dominated the second long war, known as the Great Turkish War, which lasted from 1683 to 1699.

The second long war began when Grand Vizier Kara Mustafa Pasha's Ottoman army besieged Vienna on 14 July 1683. The garrison held the Turks at bay for nearly two months. On 12 September, a Polish-Imperial army led by Polish King Jan Sobieski launched a stunning attack from the Kahlenberg Heights overlooking the city. Sobieski's Polish winged hussars, backed by an Imperial army led by Duke Charles of Lorraine, overran the Ottoman army. The survivors withdrew to Ottoman Hungary.

## Reconquest of Hungary

The great victory that the Polish-Imperial army obtained at Vienna in 1683 was the first of a half dozen decisive victories the Hapsburgs would obtain during the Great Turkish War. Taking advantage of the substantial boost in morale achieved in the wake of their victory at Vienna, the Hapsburgs set about the reconquest of Hungary.

The following year Pope Innocent XI sponsored a Holy League whose primary participants were Hapsburg Austria, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, Venice, and the Papacy. Each member of the alliance agreed that it would not make a separate peace with the Ottomans.

The armies of the time typically campaigned from roughly May to October and spent the



*Prince Eugene directs his cavalry to exploit weaknesses in the Ottoman defences*



winter in a fortified area. The Ottoman army usually wintered in Erdine or Istanbul. Since it took them one or two months to reach the front with their slow-moving supply train, the campaign season often did not begin until August.

Charles of Lorraine followed up the Hapsburg victory at Vienna with the successful 78-day siege of Buda in 1686. He sustained the momentum of his counteroffensive with a decisive victory over the Ottomans in a pitched battle in 1687, at Harkany, southern Hungary. During this exchange the fury of the Ottoman janissaries proved to be no match for their opponents' concentrated musket fire.

By this point in time, the Hapsburgs had conquered much of Hungary and had reversed many of the gains in the country made by Suleiman the Great. The Ottomans found themselves defending the Sava-Danube line with Belgrade serving as their forward base. Lorraine's successor, Max Emmanuel, Elector of Bavaria, succeeded in capturing the fortresses of Peterwardein and Belgrade in 1688.

### Battle of Slankamen

When the Holy Roman Empire joined the coalition against France in the Nine Years' War it afforded the Ottomans a chance to

regroup and resume the offensive in Hungary. Emperor Leopold sent his best commanders (Charles of Lorraine, Ludwig of Bavaria, and Prince Eugene) and the bulk of his troops to fight the French, and this gave the Ottomans an opportunity to regain ground in Serbia, Hungary, and Transylvania. Grand Vizier Fazil Mustafa Pasha retook Belgrade in October 1690 after a brief siege.

Yet the grand vizier's luck ran out on 19 August 1691 when he attacked Margrave Louis of Baden's Imperial army 40 miles north of Belgrade on the right bank of the Danube River at Slankamen. Successive waves of Ottoman troops charged the Hapsburg position, but every charge was shattered by the Imperial infantry's disciplined musketry. When Mustafa Pasha died leading a last desperate charge, his army panicked and fled the field.

### Frontier clashes

Sultan Mustafa II took the Ottoman throne in February 1695 following the death of Sultan Ahmed II. Thirty-year-old Mustafa possessed many good traits. He was energetic, zealous, and eager to learn the art of war. He believed wholeheartedly that the sultan's place was at the head of army of conquest. Yet he lacked

military experience and was often indecisive. Shortly after Ahmed's death, the fiery young sultan issued an imperial writ in which he sought to inspire an army demoralised by recent defeats at the hands of the Hapsburgs. Simply put, he stated that he intended to lead his armies in person against the Hapsburg forces like his famous forebear Suleiman the Magnificent.

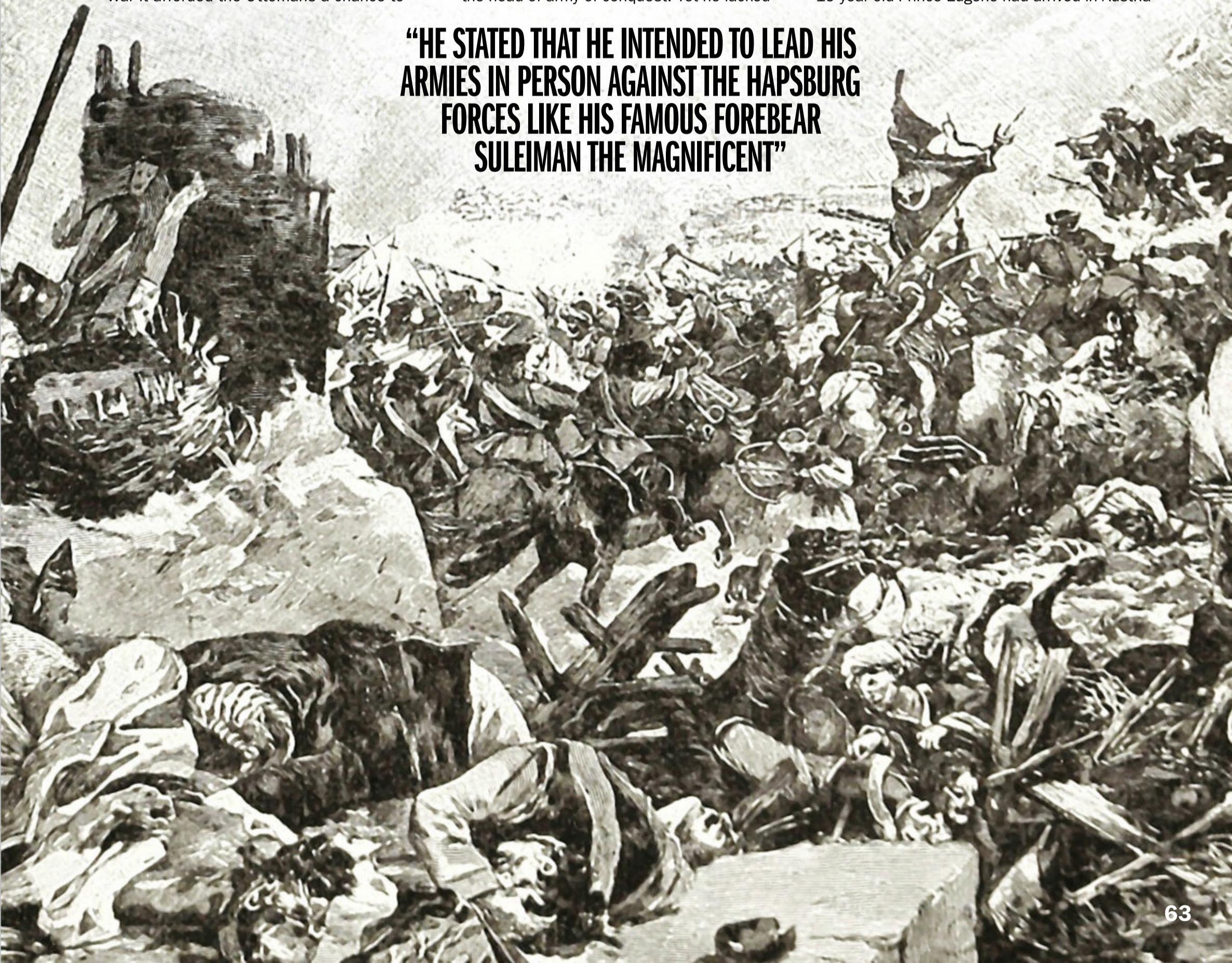
Mustafa and Grand Vizier Elmas Mehmed Pasha led the Ottoman army north from Erdine on 1 July arriving in Belgrade little over a month later. The situation in Serbia had reached a stalemate with the Austrians heavily garrisoning Peterwardein and the Ottomans doing the same in Belgrade. Mustafa therefore decided to roll back Hapsburg gains in Transylvania. Their first objective was the fortress of Lipova in southern Transylvania, which the Austrians were using as a forward base for operations against the key Ottoman supply base at Temesvar.

The following year an Imperial army led by Augustus II, Elector of Saxony, besieged Temesvar. Mustafa marched to its relief, forcing Augustus to raise his siege and withdraw north.

### Eugene Takes Command

At the outbreak of the Great Turkish War, 19-year-old Prince Eugene had arrived in Austria

**"HE STATED THAT HE INTENDED TO LEAD HIS ARMIES IN PERSON AGAINST THE HAPSBURG FORCES LIKE HIS FAMOUS FOREBEAR SULEIMAN THE MAGNIFICENT"**



eager to fight with the Imperial army. The youthful prince was of short stature and had an oval face, aquiline nose, and gleaming eyes.

He received an appointment as lieutenant in the Kufstein Dragoons, a regiment in Charles of Lorraine's army, during the relief of Vienna. Afterwards, the emperor awarded him for his valour by giving him command of the regiment. Eugene served for the next six years on the Hungarian front where he was able to observe firsthand the successful generalship of both Charles of Lorraine and Louis of Baden. After a brief stint on the Rhineland at the outset of the Nine Years' War, he received a transfer to northern Italy.

Eugene fought with great distinction on the Italian front during the Nine Years' War and received a promotion to field marshal in 1693. Four years later, Leopold appointed Eugene to serve as the commander-in-chief of the Imperial forces on the Hungarian front. When Eugene arrived in Peterwardein in July 1697 in the midst of the campaign season, the young field marshal set about improving the condition of the 30,000 Austria, Brandenburg, and Saxon troops assembled at the fortress. As he inspected and drilled the troops, he sent a request to the emperor for reinforcements, rations, ammunition, and equipment. Leopold directed his quartermasters that Eugene should receive the provisions and equipment he had requested. Since the Nine Years' War had ended, Leopold also was able to send Eugene 20,000 additional troops.

Leopold advised Eugene to avoid engaging the enemy. If Eugene should decide to give battle, he should only do so if he was certain of victory, said Leopold. He received another dispatch from the emperor on the day of battle reminding him to exercise caution.

Eugene had learned a great deal about the art of war in his 14 years of active service in the Imperial army. He hoped for an opportunity to strike the larger Ottoman army when it was vulnerable. Although Mustafa might have more men, Eugene had every confidence that he could outfight him.

### Road to battle

In his third campaign season, Sultan Mustafa departed Erdine with 80,000 troops arriving in Belgrade on 10 August 1697. His senior military advisors disagreed over the best strategy for the campaign season. Amcazade Huseyin Pasha, the commander of the Belgrade fortress, argued in favour of a northward advance against Peterwardein. He argued that Transylvania was a sideshow and that if the Ottomans were to regain control of Hungary they would first have to retake Peterwardein.

For his part, Grand Vizier Elmas Mehmed Pasha argued in favour of a march to Temesvar. He believed that Peterwardein was too strong to capture. For that reason, the sultan could focus on retaking Transylvania. Once that region was secured, the Ottoman army would be able to threaten Hapsburg strongholds in Royal Hungary.

After careful consideration, the sultan opted for a march to Temesvar. What he planned to do once he reached that destination, though, is uncertain. He may have wanted to actively campaign in Transylvania or he may simply have desired to go into winter camp early in Wallachia.

## Great Battles

# ZENTA 1697

TURKISH CAMP

ZENTA

### 01 OTTOMAN ARTILLERY INEFFECTIVE

The Ottoman field guns on the far bank of the Tisza open up on the Austrian army, but because they are out of range they are ineffective. In contrast, the Imperial guns wrought great havoc on the Ottoman infantry causing substantial casualties and disordering their formations.

### 02 SIPAHI CHARGE REPULSED

A small force of Turkish sipahi on the near side of the river charge the Austrian lines, but Imperial dragoons shatter the charge.

### 03 FULL-SCALE IMPERIAL ATTACK

Prince Eugene orders his entire army to advance against the Turkish infantry on the near bank and drive it into the river. The close coordination between the Imperial infantry and cavalry give them an advantage over the Ottoman infantry.

### 04 BOTTLENECK ON BRIDGE

Sultan Mustafa orders the bulk of his sipahi on the far bank to cross the long pontoon bridge to assist the hard-pressed infantry on the near bank. The pace of their advance is extremely slow because of the narrow width of the temporary bridge. They have no effect on the battle.

### 05 DISCIPLINED MUSKETRY

Imperial musketeers shatter Ottoman formations. Eugene directs his cuirassiers to exploit weak spots in the Ottoman perimeter. The black-breasted cuirassiers hack and slash their way into the Ottoman perimeter where they cause havoc.

Road to Petrovaradin



The Hapsburg infantry's disciplined musketry vanquished the sultan's janissaries at Zenta

"THE JANISSARIES, WHO WERE ARMED WITH BOTH BOWS AND MUSKETS, FOUGHT WITH GREAT COURAGE, BUT THEY WERE MOWED DOWN BY THE RELENTLESS VOLLEY FIRE OF THE IMPERIAL MUSKETEERS"



Hapsburg troops captured many Ottoman standards as they drove the rearguard of Sultan Mustafa's army into Tisza River



Mustafa led his army north from Belgrade on 18 August. The army crossed the Danube, then made a detour west to capture Titel Castle at the confluence of the Tisza and Danube. It then marched north along the right bank of the Tisza reaching the vicinity of the village of Zenta, which was situated 80 miles north of Belgrade, on the morning of 11 September.

Ottoman scouts had no idea of the location of the Imperial army. Mustafa ordered his engineers to throw a bridge across the river south of the village. Once it was in place, he ordered his cavalry and artillery to cross to the left bank. Aware that his janissaries on the right bank would need to protect themselves against an enemy attack, he ordered them to entrench. They hastily constructed field works and maintained a vigilant watch for the enemy as the mounted troops and gun crews streamed across the narrow bridge of boats.

### Slaughter at the riverbank

When he learned that the Ottoman army had crossed to the north side of the Danube River, Eugene assembled his army and set off to shadow his opponent. The task of tracking the enemy column fell to the Imperial hussars, who soon furnished Eugene with a prisoner to interrogate. Eugene acted immediately on the information extracted from the prisoner.

The Prince led his cavalry towards Zenta, and ordered his infantry commanders to conduct a forced march to the enemy's location. The field marshal and the cavalry arrived at the assembly point at mid-afternoon; however, the infantry did not reach Zenta until 6.00pm. This left Eugene two hours of daylight to inflict as much damage on the Turks as possible.

The Hapsburg field marshal deployed his troops in a half-moon formation before the arc of the enemy's trenches. He placed his cavalry on both wings and his infantry in the centre. Eugene had complete confidence in the ability of his army to defeat the enemy. Imperialist

musketeers had proven that their fire discipline was superior to that of the Ottoman janissary corps. As for the Imperial cavalry, the Prince could rely both on the firepower of his carbine-armed dragoons and the shock charge of his armoured cuirassiers.

Loud drums and blaring trumpets sounded the Imperial advance, and the Hapsburg line surged forward. The flanks of the Imperial army, which were anchored on the river, overlapped the entire position occupied by the entrenched janissaries.

Once the Imperialist line advanced, Mustafa directed sipahi cavalry on the far bank to recross the river and assist the infantry. Yet the narrowness of the bridge meant that only a small number could cross at a time.

### A frightful bloodbath

As the battle grew in intensity, the Ottoman line began to weaken in places. Mehmed Pasha, who was stationed with the janissaries, directed the defence for a time, but he was eventually slain. The janissaries, who were armed with both bows and muskets, fought with great courage, but they were mowed down by the relentless volley fire of the Imperial musketeers. As gaps opened up in the enemy lines, Eugene directed his cuirassiers to exploit them. A group of cuirassiers also succeeded in working their way around the Ottoman right flank to assail the Turks from behind.

At that point, the Turkish line began to collapse. Some of the janissaries fought on with great fury even though they realised that they were facing certain death. These knots of courageous janissaries, many of whom discarded their long-range weapons to wield their razor-sharp swords, soon found themselves surrounded by musketeers who shot them down at point-blank range. With the darkness growing and the battlefield shrouded in smoke, it became difficult to tell friend from foe.

Blown to pieces by the musketry and artillery, the Turkish bodies were piled high inside the

Ottoman perimeter. As the last resistance crumbled at nightfall, the Imperial troops moved through the piles of wounded and dying determined to annihilate any remaining pockets of resistance. Eugene described the battle as "a frightful bloodbath". The Imperial troops "could stand on the dead bodies as though on an island" he told the emperor.

When it was all over, 20,000 Turks lay dead inside their perimeter, and 10,000 more drowned in the river. Imperial losses were light in comparison. In addition to the grand vizier, four other viziers perished in the short but bloody battle. Mustafa escaped to Temesvar. Eugene followed up his victory by raiding deep into Serbia. His mounted force sacked Sarajevo and returned to Peterwardein laden with treasure.

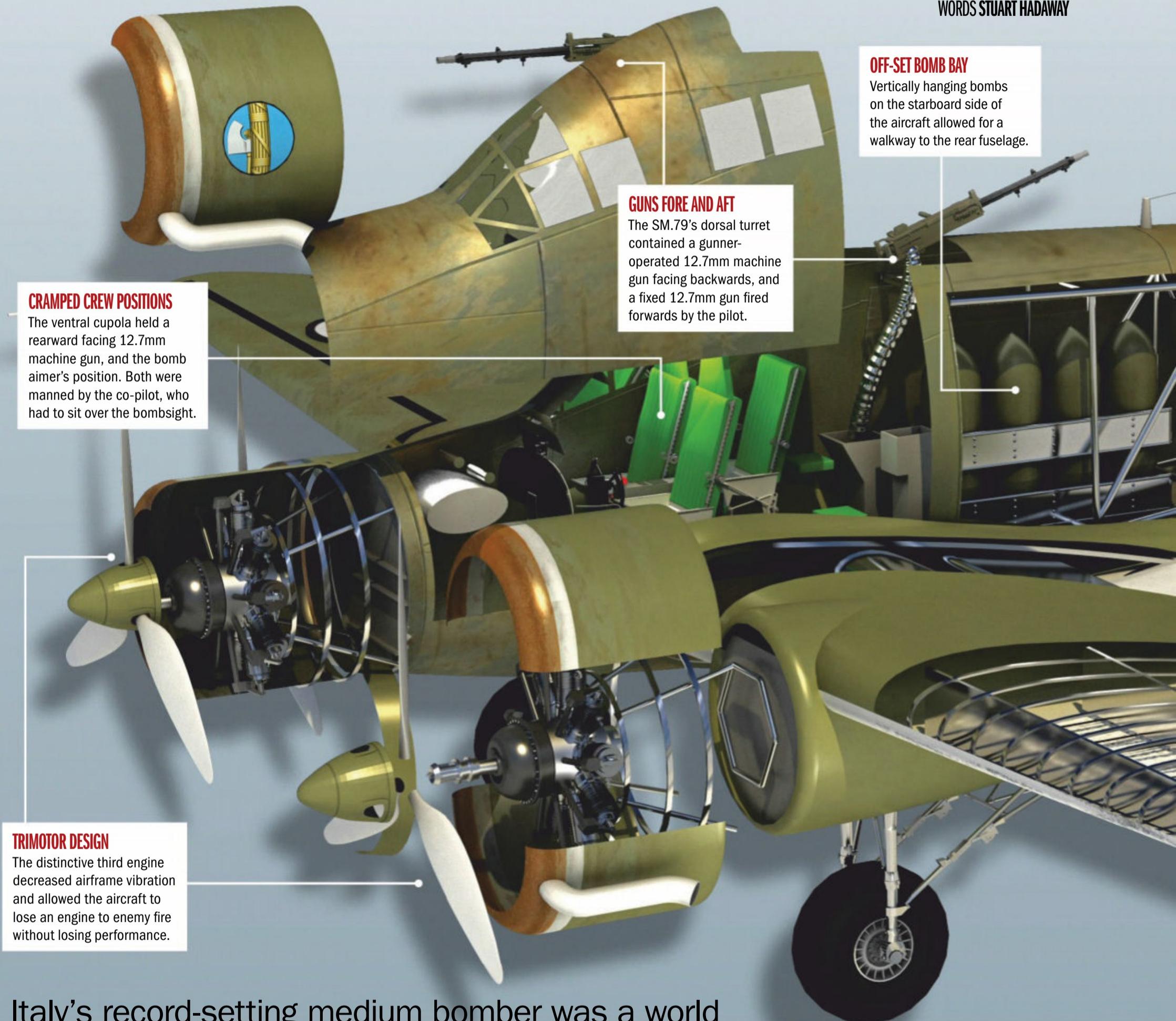
Not long afterward Mustafa asked the English to mediate a peace agreement. The English, who were assisted by the Dutch, helped the Hapsburgs and Ottomans come to terms. Through the Treaty of Karlowitz of 1699, the Hapsburgs recovered all of Hungary (except for the province of Temesvar), Croatia, and Transylvania. The Ottoman Empire retained the lands south of the Sava-Danube line, which amounted to most of Serbia, including Belgrade. The Hapsburg victory in the Great Turkish War marked a precipitous decline in Ottoman power in Central Europe.


**FURTHER READING**

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# SAVOIA-MARCHETTI SM.79

WORDS STUART HADAWAY



Italy's record-setting medium bomber was a world leader in 1934, but was already outdated by 1940

The Savoia-Marchetti SM.79 'Sparviero' ('Sparrowhawk') was the Regia Aeronautica's premier bomber of the 1930s and 1940s. Built originally as a civil airliner, it was designed for speed and had a distinctive trimotor configuration. It set numerous world speed records in its first years of service, and then cut its teeth as a warplane

with the Italian contingent fighting in the Spanish Civil War. It proved successful, as its high speed and manoeuvrability allowed it to evade most contemporary fighters.

However, by the time of the Second World War this advantage was fading, and the SM.79 was found to be under-powered and lacking defensive firepower. As a medium bomber it also had a light bomb load, and this small punch was further

dissipated by the Regia Aeronautica's doctrine of high-level, and thus inaccurate, bombing. The mixed-material construction allowed little in the way of substantial development, but the engines were upgraded, and it was later converted into an effective torpedo bomber. Unusually able to carry two torpedoes, its speed and manoeuvrability gave it a great advantage in low-level anti-shipping strikes.

**BEAM GUNS**

A 7.7mm (.303 inch) Lewis machine gun could be fitted on a sliding mount to be used at hatches on either beam of the fuselage.

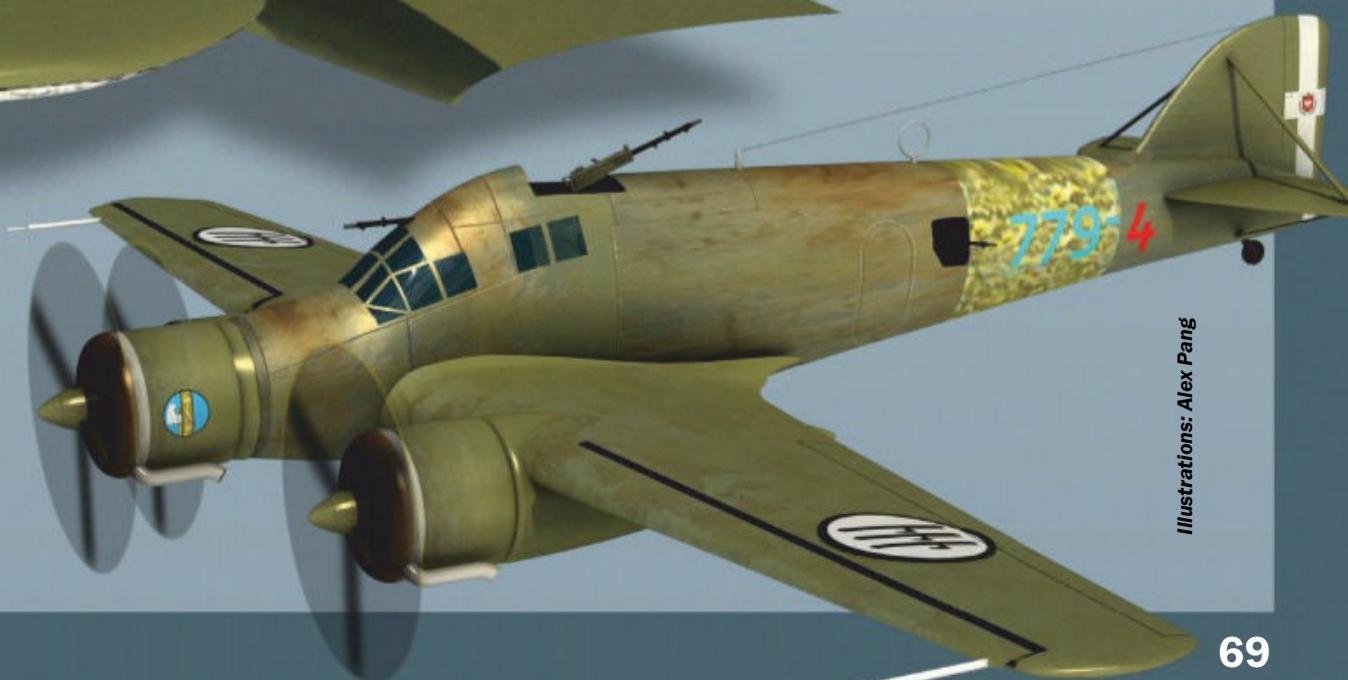
## SAVOIA MARCHETTI SM.79 'SPARVIERO'

|                        |                                                         |
|------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>COMMISSIONED:</b>   | 1934                                                    |
| <b>ORIGIN:</b>         | ITALY                                                   |
| <b>LENGTH:</b>         | 16.2M (53FT 2IN)                                        |
| <b>WINGSPAN:</b>       | 20.2M (66FT 3IN)                                        |
| <b>ENGINE:</b>         | 3 X ALFA ROMEO 126 R.C. 34 582KW (780HP) ROTARY ENGINES |
| <b>CREW:</b>           | 4-5                                                     |
| <b>PRIMARY WEAPON:</b> | UP TO 1,247KG (2,750LB) OF BOMBS OR 2X 450MM TORPEDOS   |

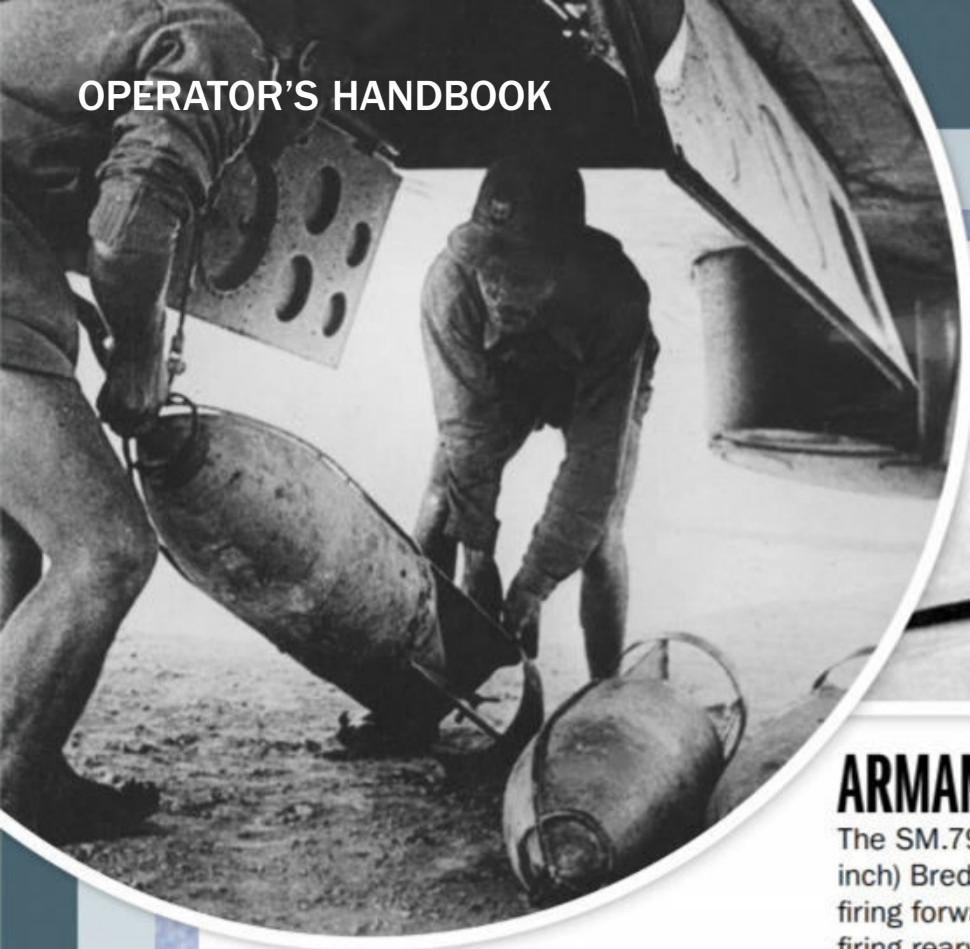


In 1940, SM.79s made up two-thirds of the Regia Aeronautica's front-line bomber force

"ABLE TO CARRY TWO TORPEDOES, ITS SPEED AND MANOEUVRABILITY GAVE IT A GREAT ADVANTAGE IN LOW-LEVEL ANTI-SHIPPING STRIKES"



Illustrations: Alex Pang



*Above: Bombing up an SM.79: the bombs had to be hung vertically due to the small size of the bomb bay*



*Lewis machine-gun with improvised armour*

## ARMAMENT

The SM.79 carried three 12.7mm (0.5 inch) Breda SAFAT machine-guns: one fixed firing forward and two gunner-operated firing rearwards. One 7.7mm (.303 inch) Lewis machine gun in the fuselage could fire on either beam, later replaced by two

fixed 7.7mm Bredas, although the cramped fuselage meant only one could be operated at a time. The bomb load was limited to two 500kg (1,100lb) bombs or 1,250kg (2,750lb) of smaller bombs. The SM.79-II could carry two 450mm torpedoes with 170kg (375lb) warheads, increased to 180kg (440lb) versions in late 1941.

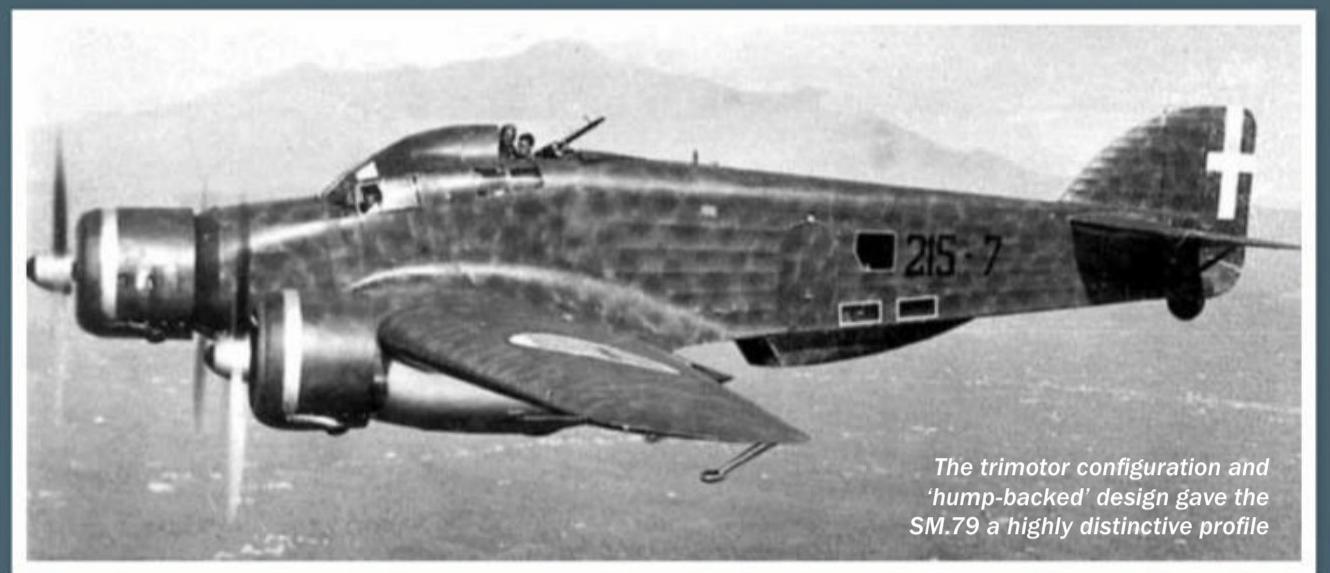
**"THE ITALIAN ENGINE INDUSTRY ALWAYS  
LAGGED BEHIND THE MAJOR POWERS, AND  
LACKED MORE POWERFUL IN-LINE DESIGNS"**



*Loading a torpedo onto an SM.79*

## DESIGN

The SM.79 was of mixed-material construction. The fuselage was formed around a frame of steel tubing, with metal skin on the nose section, plywood over the main fuselage, and fabric covering the sides and underneath. Although light in weight, aiding speed, this insubstantial structure also limited the bomb load, and greatly inhibited its development potential. The wings were a one-piece cantilever wooden construction, with spruce and plywood spars covered in plywood skin. The wings had leading edge slats and trailing edge flaps, giving the aircraft a high wing-loading and impressive manoeuvrability.



*The trimotor configuration and 'hump-backed' design gave the SM.79 a highly distinctive profile*

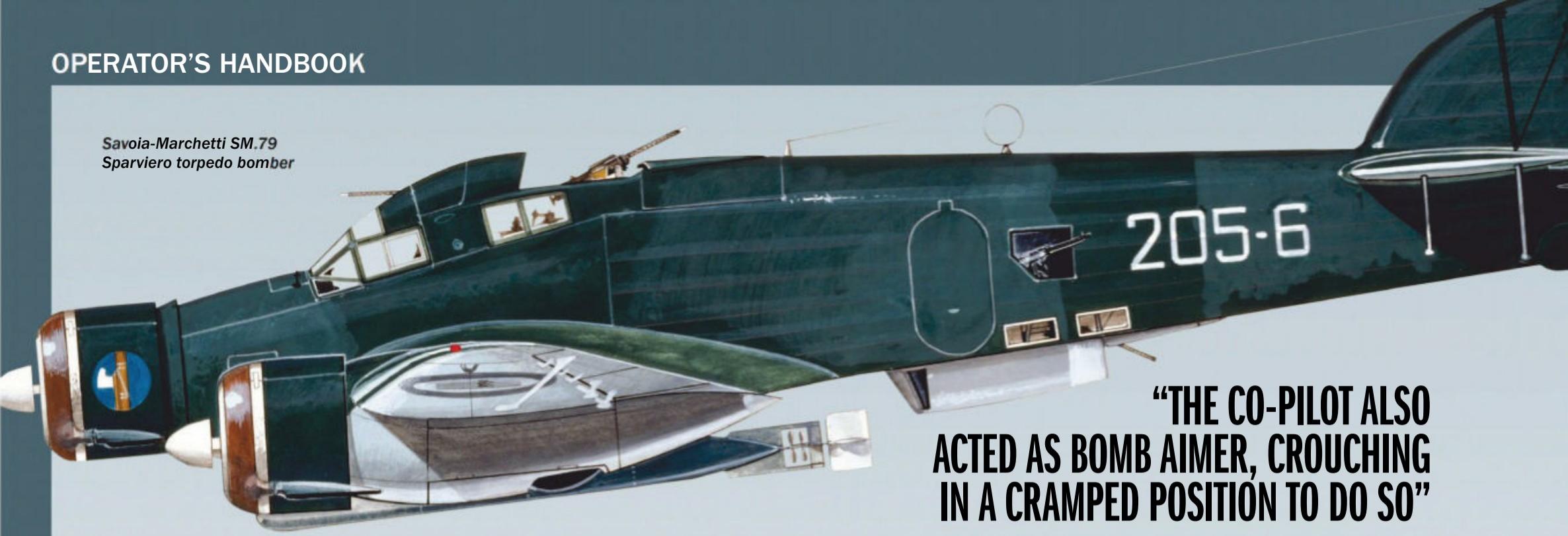
*A drawing of the Savoia-Marchetti SM.79*



*Below: The Alfa Romeo was more reliable than most Italian engines, but rotaries were still inherently less powerful than inline engines*

*Below: Working on the engines: Italy continually suffered from producing under-powered and unreliable engines*

Savoia-Marchetti SM.79  
Sparviero torpedo bomber



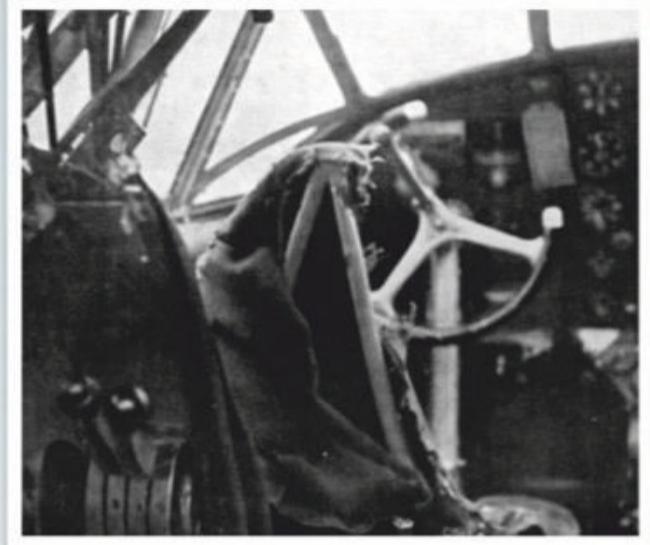
**"THE CO-PILOT ALSO ACTED AS BOMB AIMER, CROUCHING IN A CRAMPED POSITION TO DO SO"**

## COCKPIT

The SM.79 had a comfortable cockpit with pilot and co-pilot side-by-side. Behind on the port side was the flight engineer's station, while the radio operator was on the starboard side. The latter also operated the rear-facing dorsal gun, while the co-pilot would have to walk back along the fuselage, past the bomb bay, to operate the rear ventral gun. The co-pilot also acted as bomb aimer, crouching in a cramped position to do so. From 1940, a fifth crew member was often carried to man the rear-fuselage positions.



Above: The wireless operator's station, just behind the cockpit. He would need to stand and turn around to use the dorsal gun



Above: In the cockpit of the SM.79 the pilot and co-pilot could sit comfortably side-by-side



Image: Ennio Varani



Images: Alamy, Getty

## SERVICE HISTORY

The SM.79 started as the SM.81 civil airliner in 1934. Fast, manoeuvrable, and with high-survivability due to its three engines, it was adopted for military use in 1936. Between 1937 and 1938, the SM.79 set some 26 different world speed records. In February 1937 a contingent deployed to Spain to support the Fascists in the Civil War, and proved very successful, taking part in raids on cities (including, infamously, Guernica),

military targets, and docks and shipping. By the time Italy entered the Second World War in June 1940, the SM.79 (including the -II model, with improved engines) was their most numerous bomber, with 594 in service.

However, it proved sadly vulnerable to modern fighters over the Balkans, North Africa and Malta, although the torpedo bomber variant proved more successful. After Italy's surrender in September 1943, the type served with the Allies plus the small legacy contingent that stayed with the Germans.

An SM.79 during an attack on republican positions near Alcaniz

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## Heroes of the Medal of Honor

# RODOLFO HERNÁNDEZ

On a rainy, windswept slope in Korea this corporal was seriously wounded but refused to abandon his position, confronting an onrushing enemy with a one-man bayonet charge

WORDS MICHAEL E. HASKEW

**I**t was another miserable night on a hillside in Korea. Rain was pelting down on the men of the 187th Airborne Regimental Combat Team entrenched about 15 miles south of the village of Wontong-ni.

Corporal Rodolfo P. "Rudy" Hernández and other men of Company G, 2nd Battalion, hunkered low in their foxholes, waiting. At approximately 2.00am the shrill whine of North Korean bugles pierced the uneasy calm as the enemy marshalled its strength for an all-out assault on the American positions along the barren slope of Hill 420. The precious high ground was an otherwise innocuous promontory in the rugged terrain of northern Korea, but in the predawn darkness of 31 May 1951, it became a killing field, the focal point of a life and death struggle.

Ten months after the communist Korean People's Army had surged across the 38th parallel on 25 June 1950, invading South Korea in an attempt to unify the peninsula by force, United Nations troops had fought the North Koreans and later their allies of the Chinese People's Volunteer Army to a bloody stalemate. Combat ebbed and flowed, and American forces bore the brunt of the fighting alongside the army of the Republic of Korea. By the spring of 1951, the most recent communist offensive had been blunted and subsequently pushed back almost to its starting line by the determined UN forces.

As overtures of peace talks began to circulate, the commanders of the UN counteroffensive that had successfully reversed the enemy's fortunes were ordered to essentially suspend major offensive operations, consolidate their positions, and conduct only small-scale manoeuvres to maintain security, gather intelligence on North Korean troop movements, and generally harass the enemy.

For Rodolfo Hernández and others like him, however, the order meant to dig in, while the fighting, dying, and muddling through a miserable existence continued just the same.

Hernandez, a native of Colton, California, was one of eight children born into a family of farmworkers. In 1948, at the age of 17, he obtained permission from his parents and enlisted in the US Army, volunteered for parachute training, and was assigned to the 187th Airborne Infantry Regiment. A few months later, his unit was shipped to Germany as a component of the post-World War II occupation forces. Then, two months after the eruption of the Korean War, the regiment was reorganised, reinforced, and designated the 187th Airborne Regimental Combat Team.

Among the first American and UN units to reach the Korean peninsula intact following the outbreak of hostilities, the 187th Airborne RCT deployed to the combat zone from Japan in late August 1950. Nicknamed the "Rakkasans" due to the literal translation of the English "airborne" to Japanese as "falling with umbrellas", the unit completed a parachute insertion near the towns of Sukchon and Sunchon, fought Chinese troops at Wonju, and then executed a follow-up airdrop in the Munsan-ni Valley on 23 March 1951, the second airborne operation of the Korean War. During its combat service the 187th Airborne RCT earned a Presidential Unit Citation.

Hernández remembered his 11th parachute jump vividly as the troopers exited their transports from an altitude of just 600 feet. "We jumped into the enemy ... Before the jump I felt like John Wayne. By the time my chute

**"FEARLESSLY ENGAGING THE FOE, HE KILLED 6 OF THE ENEMY BEFORE FALLING UNCONSCIOUS FROM GRENADE, BAYONET, AND BULLET WOUNDS BUT HIS ACTION MOMENTARILY HALTED THE ENEMY ADVANCE..."**

Medal of Honor Citation

Years after receiving the Medal of Honor for heroism in Korea, Rodolfo Hernández wears the decoration with pride at the 60th anniversary commemorations of the war



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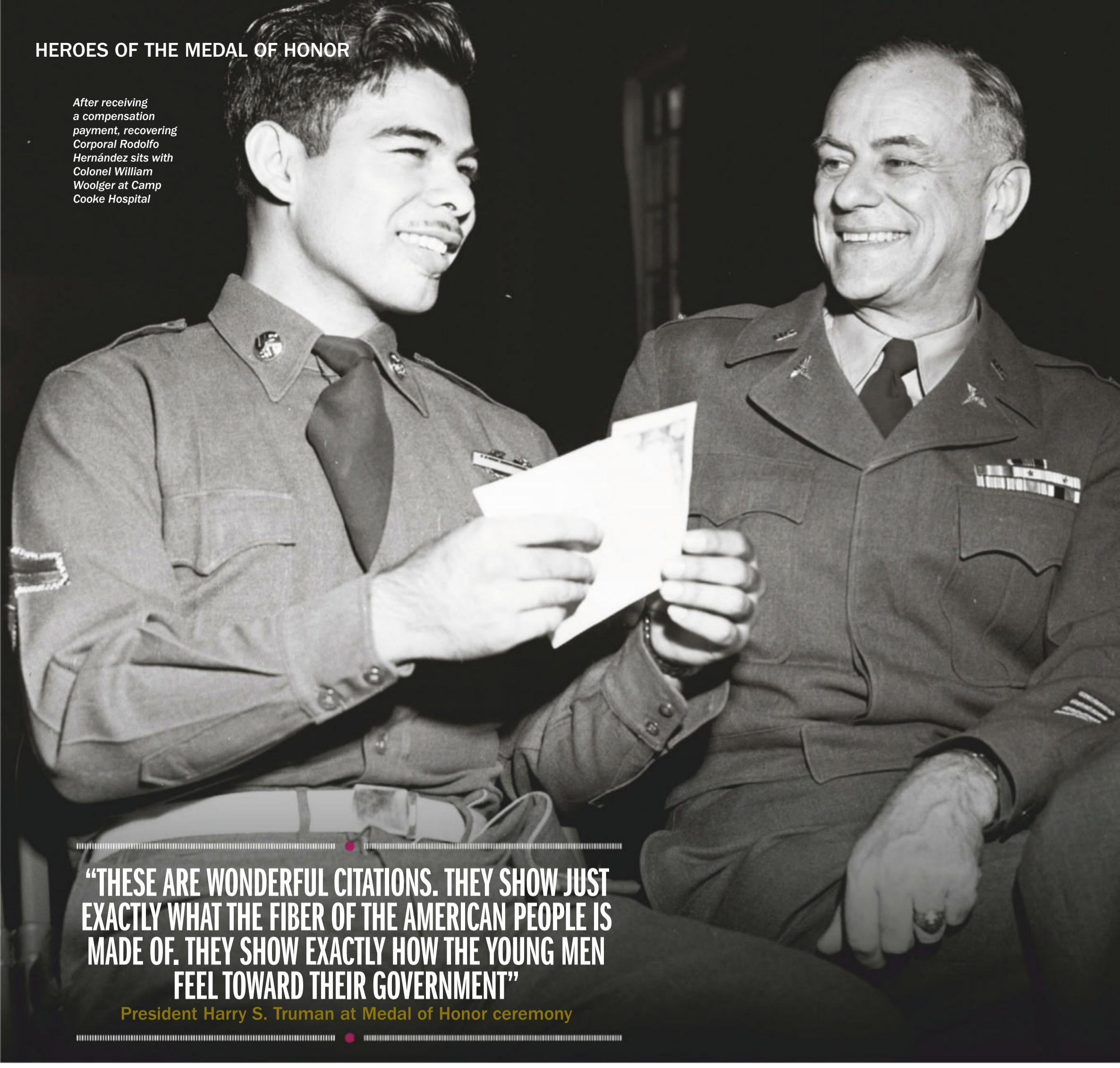
**“SHRAPNEL TORE MY HELMET FROM MY HEAD AND [INJURED] A LARGE PART OF MY SKULL AND A PART OF MY BRAIN. I WAS PARALYSED, UNCONSCIOUS... IN A COMA FOR A MONTH”**

Corporal Rodolfo Hernández

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## HEROES OF THE MEDAL OF HONOR

After receiving a compensation payment, recovering Corporal Rodolfo Hernández sits with Colonel William Woolger at Camp Cooke Hospital



**"THESE ARE WONDERFUL CITATIONS. THEY SHOW JUST EXACTLY WHAT THE FIBER OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE IS MADE OF. THEY SHOW EXACTLY HOW THE YOUNG MEN FEEL TOWARD THEIR GOVERNMENT"**

President Harry S. Truman at Medal of Honor ceremony



Corporal Rodolfo Hernández

opened, I was already on the ground. The first round that went over my head was artillery. Afterward, I felt this big," he related, holding two fingers about an inch apart. "I knew they meant business."

Although it was not their first time in combat, the encounter at Hill 420 was one of the most intense the troopers of the 187th experienced during their entire tour of duty. As the high-pitched communist bugle calls subsided, an intense artillery and mortar barrage erupted. Shells of varied calibre screamed down on the American line, blasting craters and spewing shrapnel in every direction. Machine-guns chattered, and rifle fire crackled as a wave of North Korean

troops surged forward, attempting to drive the defenders from the high ground.

Hernández and the rest of Company G fired steadily at the shadowy mass of enemy troops streaming wildly up the slope, peppering their line with automatic weapons fire and stopping long enough to shower the American positions with hand grenades. Early in the fighting both Hernández and his foxhole mate were wounded. The enemy onslaught appeared unstoppable, and as ammunition supplies dwindled the order was passed for the 187th to pull back.

"I was struck all over my body by grenade fragments," remembered Hernández. "I was hurt bad and getting dizzy." Still, he kept shooting at the approaching North Koreans

Paratroopers of the 187th Airborne Regimental Combat Team, Corporal Rodolfo Hernández's unit, execute a jump in the Korean War



until his rifle jammed when a cartridge cooked off in the chamber. Within seconds he was stunned as a shell fragment sliced through his helmet, inflicting a grievous wound that tore away a portion of his skull and some brain matter.

Hernández hurled hand grenades at the onrushing enemy until his supply was



*Right: Corporal Rodolfo Hernández, received the Medal of Honor and proudly wore the shoulder patch of the 187th Airborne Regimental Combat Team*

exhausted. "My buddy was firing, and I was firing, and my platoon leader said 'Withdraw!' I didn't want to withdraw. I couldn't fire more because of the ruptured cartridge. I had six grenades, and I threw all six. At that time I was wounded ... I thought no doctor was going to repair me. I might as well go out all the way. I put my bayonet on my rifle and said 'Here I come!'. "

Hernández emerged from cover, rushing forward and bayoneting the first enemy soldier he encountered. "Every time I took a step, blood rolled

down my face. It was hard to see. I killed one with the bayonet, and the second one got me here," he said, pointing to his chin. "But he didn't go very far. He took some of my teeth out. I killed six of them before falling unconscious."

The one-man bayonet charge rocked the attackers, who hesitated just long enough for Company G and the rest of the 187th Airborne RCT to reorganise and counterattack, regaining the summit of Hill 420. The Americans held on grimly until the North Korean onslaught melted away before daylight.

As soon as they were able, medical personnel moved in. Corpsman Keith Oates was the first to reach Hernández, lying surrounded by the bodies of the six enemy soldiers he had bayoneted to death. Oates did what he could, dressing wounds from enemy bayonets in the soldier's back and lower lip and sending Hernández down the hill on a litter. Bloody and spattered with mud, his large head wound appearing lethal, Hernández was declared dead as he lay at the aid station. Attendants placed him in a body bag and started to carry him away. Just then, one of them noticed a slight movement of his fingers. Miraculously, he was alive. After evacuation, he remained unconscious for a month. During his recovery, the hero was transferred to several hospitals. Doctors repaired his shattered lower jaw and replaced the missing piece of skull with a plastic plate. His wounds were devastating.

"I had to learn how to swallow, eat, feed myself, walk, and speak," Hernández recalled. "Months passed before I was able to speak a single word. It took 12 years for me to recover from the massive injuries that I sustained. I underwent multiple surgeries for five years and spent the next eight years working to regain control of my body. I still do not have complete use of my right arm and hand, but I learned to write and do most things with my left hand."

Early in his recovery Hernández was informed that he would receive the Medal of Honor for his heroism at Hill 420. On 12 April 1952, he was able to stand during the ceremonies in the White House garden as President Harry S. Truman presented the medal to Hernández and two other recipients, Army 1st Lieutenant Lloyd Burke and Technical Sergeant Harold E. Wilson, US Marine Corps.

Hernández's citation read in part, "His comrades were forced to retire due to lack of ammunition but Cpl. Hernández, although wounded in an exchange of grenades, continued to deliver deadly fire into the ranks of the onrushing assailants until a ruptured cartridge rendered his rifle inoperative. Immediately leaving his position, Cpl. Hernández rushed the enemy armed only with rifle and bayonet."

After the war, Rodolfo Hernández returned to civilian life, attending college and working for the Veterans Administration in the Los Angeles area as a counsellor to other wounded veterans. He retired to North Carolina, regularly receiving honours and recognition for his valour in Korea. During a Veterans Day parade 56 years after the fateful engagement at Hill 420, he reunited with medic Keith Oates, who had helped save his life. Hernández died in 2013 at the age of 82.



# OPERATION NECK

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14 AUGUST 1943

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Spy, SOE agent, and the first British operative to land on Italian soil during WWII, Dick Mallaby's real wartime experiences resemble a Hollywood thriller. In his recently published book, *An Englishman Abroad*, **Gianluca Barneschi** recounts Mallaby's incredible story. The following extract from the book details Mallaby's preparations before inserting into Italy

**D**ick Mallaby was a perfect candidate for SOE. Besides being young, reckless, sporty and multilingual, in the course of his military career he had also qualified as a paratrooper and was a skilled wireless operator. And he had grown up in one of the countries which Britain was now fighting.

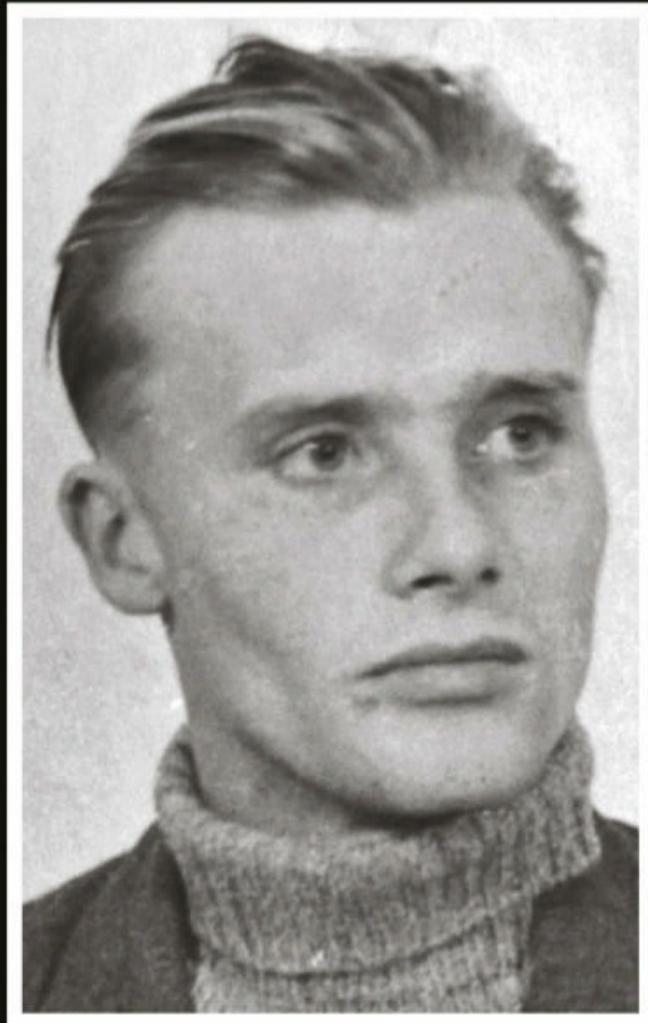
While the Italian state security services had placed Dick Mallaby and his family under surveillance from the outbreak of war, in Britain, Special Operations Executive had not immediately spotted his potential.

It is fair to say that the trump card on Mallaby's CV – the fact that he had lived in Italy for a long time, and had a perfect knowledge of its language, customs, transport network and geography – was not immediately relevant, given that, apart from Allied bombing raids, in the opening years of the war events were played out far from the Italian peninsula. However, from the point of its creation SOE had attempted to carry out missions in Italy, and, even at the highest level, it was wrongly believed that beneficial subversive and guerrilla activities could be stirred up in Mussolini's homeland.

However, at the end of 1941, in the wake of events in Africa, the theoretical number of Italians available for missions against their homeland increased, as did the need for Italian-speaking Brits to run them. So, the military situation became more favourable for someone with Dick Mallaby's skills.

Dick Mallaby, as already noted, officially joined SOE on 15 January 1942 as an escort officer, translator and interpreter. Having completed his training, he was sent to Suez to work with a group of Italian volunteers, including both prisoners of war and civilian

*A mugshot of Dick Mallaby, used with kind permission from the Mallaby family*



## "IT WAS A RISKY OPERATION EVEN BY SOE STANDARDS, CONSIDERING ITS USE OF AN ITALIAN ON A MISSION AGAINST HIS OWN COUNTRY, AGAINST STANDARD OPERATIONAL NORMS"

internees. Mallaby was tasked with escorting the most promising volunteers to Haifa, Palestine. Whilst there, he took the opportunity to take parachute and radio-telegraphy courses at SOE's Mount Carmel training camp. But something much more interesting was beginning to take shape.

During the first months of 1942, SOE had planned to set up a radio in Italy, and it was decided that the Trieste area, a strategically important part of enemy territory, would be the ideal location. SOE's Cairo headquarters conceived a special operation (codenamed Pallinode) aimed at infiltrating an agent to make good use of this device, and from October 1942 began to train Italian volunteers for such a mission.

It was a risky operation even by SOE standards, considering its use of an Italian on a mission against his own country, against standard operational norms.

Efforts focused on Bruno Luzzi, a 30-year-old Tuscan from a moderately socialist family, recruited in 1941 by SOE in Addis Ababa, where he had been working for the past six years in

aviation. Luzzi was given the codename Kelly (or D/E 42).

In November 1942, Kelly learned the details of his mission and was placed in the hands of Dick Mallaby for specialised advanced training, which took place in Haifa and Cairo. The plan was for Kelly to reach Trieste with the help of SOE's Slovenian branch, by first parachuting into Yugoslavia and then boarding a merchant ship.

Once in Trieste, Kelly was to hook up two local agents working for SOE (codenamed PSI and agent 900) and keep each in contact with SOE by means of a radio (sent from London via Bern, Switzerland), in order to communicate operational needs, agree details of subsequent missions and provide all sorts of useful information.

Agent 900 was in fact Eligio Klein (alias Almerigotti, alias Giusto), an Italian double agent from Trieste whom the Servizio Informazioni Militare had already turned with great success and without arousing British suspicions.

According to John McCaffery, SOE's head of Bern from February 1941 who also managed Italian affairs, Klein was a "first-class agent on which everything could be waged", given that "we will never have a more able man in our pay".

Klein claimed to be Jewish, a fact that should have raised British suspicions given the race laws in force in Italy, and had passed himself off as a former army officer who headed an anti-fascist organisation called Comitato d'azione (Action Committee), comprising 1,500 members. Despite the clumsiness of all this, Klein was blindly trusted by SOE; ignoring basic precaution, he was even put in touch with other agents operating in Italy.

*Below: One of the last photographs of Dick Mallaby, used with kind permission from the Mallaby family*



Cesare Amè, head of SIM until 18 August 1943, describes the operation in his book *Guerra segreta in Italia (Secret War In Italy)*, "Every week or so the British sent a suitcase to Italy containing 30-40kg of various sabotage materials which, through our agents, regularly fell into our hands ... It was necessary for the agents to demonstrate the use made of the material. SIM carried out a detailed study of all unrelated incidents of and facts related to sabotage that took place in Italy, in all their variations, to appropriately inform the agents so that they could transmit the results to the British as evidence of their alleged work.

"From October 1942, sabotage material intended for the network of agents, which in the meantime had spread to Southern Italy and the Italian islands, was delivered in c.150kg bidons which British submarines deposited at certain points on the Tyrrhenian coast or was parachuted onto lakes Viverone, Lesina, Varano. Since the choice of location, day, time etc had previously been agreed, the material was picked up by SIM's elements, who were aware of everything."

### "IT WAS A RISKY OPERATION EVEN BY SOE STANDARDS, CONSIDERING ITS USE OF AN ITALIAN ON A MISSION AGAINST HIS OWN COUNTRY"

Agent 900 was considered a fundamental element within SOE's Italian organisation, so much so that he received funds worth millions of lire and from December 1942 was in possession of a radio. It also meant that his purported exploits were highlighted among SOE's major successes, and even included in reports sent to Churchill himself (who was delicately made aware of the subsequent discoveries).

Among the materiel that was intercepted by the Italians in those years was a packet of suicide pills that they promptly replaced with harmless substitutes, in order to exploit the possibility of interrogating anyone considering such a macabre shortcut, as well as to develop an antidote.

Klein's true role was discovered by the British only in November 1943, when this serious infiltration was revealed by SIM personnel who had begun to collaborate with the Allies in southern Italy.

Thus a dismayed and terrified SOE realised that most of McCaffery's most important agents were working for SIM (and initially also for the Organizzazione per la Vigilanza e la Repression dell'Antifascismo – OVRA – the Organisation for Vigilance and Repression of Anti-Fascism, the Fascist intelligence organisation) and also that all the safe places indicated by agent 900 within Italy were run by SIM itself.

Attempts were made to gloss over this embarrassing affair, above all towards the political-military leadership. That was successful and became the official line in post-war authoritative accounts and works about SOE, generating erroneous but persistent reports and statements.

In fact, in 1945, when the unmasked Klein was questioned, the resulting report tried to portray him as a skilled and keen double agent actually working for the British. This version

Dick Mallaby poses with some Italian soldiers in Monopoli, in 1944. Used with kind permission from the Mallaby family



obliterated the fact that even the person who acted as a courier and link between McCaffery and Klein – Elio Andreoli – was a SIM agent, who not only had the opportunity to intercept all the shipments of money and materiel, but also to verify the correspondence and evaluate the behaviour of Klein. The cross examination of British, American and Italian secret papers reveals that SIM agents, shrewdly, did not trust Klein as much as the British.

It is no wonder that the Italian secret services were the only functional apparatus of the Kingdom of Italy to receive consistent praise and attestations of superior skills from the British military and historians.

William Deakin (who, besides being a friend and ‘literary assistant’ to Churchill during the war, was an SOE agent prior to dedicating himself to the writing of history) praised the Italians as Allied intelligence’s “most brilliant professional opponent operating in any European country”.

Churchill himself on several occasions expressed the belief that SIM formed the most efficient part of the Italian armed forces, even stating that “SIM did not lose the war”. Erwin Rommel confided to a SIM agent that he

trusted the Italian information services more than the German ones, an opinion based on the amount of strategic and secret information given to him, which proved enormously useful for his initial successes in North Africa.

It has taken until the 21st century for a more critical approach to finally be offered, with Roderick Bailey correctly stating “the Second World War was not the heyday of British secret service vetting”. In no case was this more obvious than in McCaffery’s blind faith in agent 900, a faith so extreme that it was not shaken even when he was informed by other sources that agent 900’s network was a creation of SIM.

Returning to Pallinode, a detailed picture of its continual, drawn-out deferments and operational modifications emerges from secret documents in the British and American archives. The first documentary evidence, dated 8 August 1942, reveals that SOE’s Cairo branch was informed that the planned operation was to deliver an agent (possibly an Italian) into north-west Yugoslavia, who was then to be taken into northern Italy. Three days later, in reply to this, it was pointed out that the usefulness of an agent without a radio was very limited.

As a consequence, the Bern station became involved, both to guarantee safe houses through the groups operating in Trieste, and to arrange the dispatch of a radio.

The response from Bern was positive and SOE’s leadership speeded up preparations, giving notice on 24 August that the operation was in “an advanced state of planning”. However, almost a year passed between planning and execution.

A top-secret message dated 30 September stated that a cryptographic code plan called Maraschino had been set up for the mission, while on 7 October the Bern station announced that the safe house in Trieste was Flat B on the third floor of No. 14 Via Diaz, belonging to Mrs Maria Pitacco (the pass phrase was “I am the friend of Mr Remo Dussi, who made arrangements for the room with you”).

On 16 October, Cairo reported that agent Kelly could not enter action before 19 November, with the prior consent of the ‘welcoming committee’ in Yugoslavia; the communications of that time reveal there were also major problems with the required false papers.



Four days later, a message from London expressed satisfaction that Kelly had not "gone off", given that "this would have been particularly frustrating since we set up the Trieste base – something that was not easy to do – and our reputation among our people in Italy would have suffered if we had not been able to do our part of the job".

From this long message it emerges that agent Kelly was meant to keep a low profile initially, avoiding any risks, transmitting messages for only a few hours a week and seeking to improve clandestine links to and from Yugoslavia. The note ended by pointing out that via the Bern station, agent 900 (the 'head of the Italian group') was asked to assist Kelly. Thus, Italian counterespionage became aware of the Pallinode operation almost immediately, thanks to the engagement of agent 900's services.

According to a specific memorandum, Pallinode's objectives were to assist the groups with which SOE was interacting in northern Italy with communications, guerrilla strategies and sabotage. In addition, the agent was to carefully monitor these groups'

## "THERE IS NO BETTER FIGHTER THAN AN ITALIAN, IF HE HAS FAITH IN THE CAUSE FOR WHICH HE IS FIGHTING"

activities, without arousing suspicion. With regard to transmissions, the agent should proceed without too much involvement from local groups, making sure that information was always carefully chosen, and giving priority to that of a political and military nature. They should also execute false transmissions as a precaution, especially where the duration of the broadcast had gone on too long.

Although branch work focused on such security details, the whole operation was doomed from the outset because of SIM's successful infiltration of SOE. This is confirmed by the confidential directives dated 22 October 1942, in which it is clear that SOE's leadership placed complete reliance, without reservation on agent

900's group, to whom the entire management of the mission and of the agent was delegated following his arrival in Trieste.

It was pointed out to Kelly that his security depended on the protection of agent 900's group, which was, "doing useful work and expanding. With a W/T man to maintain contact with us they should go still ahead. There will come the time when we may need to take control over what is done there, and it would be one of Kelly's jobs to assist in the reception of additional agents. His future usefulness will depend almost entirely on his ability to establish himself well in the confidence of 900 and prove his ability. 900 has an affiliated group at Venice (our own name for this group [is] 'The Cubs') and it is quite possible they may wish to pass Kelly on to Venice."

In the following days, the relevant departments worked hard to produce the necessary false documents and to improve the cryptographic package and the supply of Italian currency. However, there were concerns about delays in organising the Yugoslav assets to provide the agent's reception, leading to the prospect of using submarines stationed in Malta. The mission start date was postponed to January, which added the further complication of the looming winter weather; however, another more fundamental complication arose.

Agent Kelly had already caused a few problems and proved to be somewhat slow on the uptake. As a result, SOE's leadership assigned him to the personal care of instructor Dick Mallaby in an effort to bring him up to an acceptable standard in vital Morse and radio-telegraphy skills.

Dick Mallaby's name pops up for the first time in a secret dispatch of 7 November 1942, which states that the hesitant agent Kelly was to start an additional course of radio-telegraphy under Mallaby himself (who had been promoted to sergeant from 1 September).

The secret documents suggest that Mallaby was primarily a sort of guardian angel for Kelly (the instructions were for Kelly to be under constant watch and to have no contact with the outside world). In this period, the two of them resided between Jerusalem and Haifa.

Despite 'Mallaby's medicine', the patient did not improve. Kelly, whilst a volunteer, definitively lost heart and gave up when informed of the imminent launch of his mission (especially on account of his fear of parachuting).

Commenting retrospectively on this key episode, Mallaby, expressing regret and then disappointment, consigned to posterity a phrase which, above all, reveals a great ability to identify the attitudes of Italian people, "There is no better fighter than an Italian, if he has faith in the cause for which he is fighting."

Image: Alamy, Mallaby Family

**MONKEY PLAN**

**CALL SIGNS**

MONKEY ..... Y H N  
BASE ..... X J K

**FREQUENCIES**

MONKEY .... 9050 A. Main Day  
9630 B. Reserve Day  
4525 C. Main Night  
5820 D. Reserve Night

MONKEY may also use: 9350 R.  
4675 L.  
3979 M.  
5777 P.

BASE ... 8436 E. Main Day  
8630 F. Reserve Day  
4645 G. Main Night  
4540 H. Reserve Night

**FREQUENCY CHANGE SIGNALS**

X J ... "Change your transmitting frequency to ...."  
H N ... "I am changing my transmitting frequency to ..."

**SCHEDULES**

At the following times G.M.T.  
MONKEY ~~XXXX~~

DAILY at 1300 hrs. Transmit on A. Listen on E.  
0630 hrs. \* \* C. \* \* G.

**TRANSPOSITION TABLE**

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 0 |
| G | T | S | A | E | Q | D | O | L | K |
| J | B | U | V | R | C | Z | P | M | I |
| H | W | Y |   |   |   | X | N | F |   |

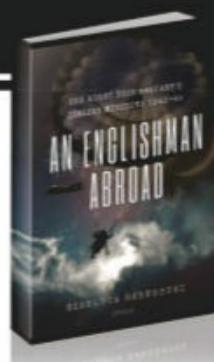
**DAY INDICATING TABLE**

|      |      |       |      |       |      |      |
|------|------|-------|------|-------|------|------|
| Sun. | Mon. | Tues. | Wed. | Thur. | Fri. | Sat. |
| 2    | 5    | 1     | 3    | 4     | 7    | 6    |

**ADDITIONAL CONTACTS**

You write down the time required, say 1900 hrs. Add the day indicating figure for say Monday. Thus you have 19005. Then transpose into letters from any line of Transposition Table, thus: GMIKE or HNFKR or JLKFE &c.

This is an extract from Chapter 3: Operation Neck, 14 August 1943 of *An Englishman Abroad* by Gianluca Barneschi, published by Osprey.  
Visit [www.ospreypublishing.com](http://www.ospreypublishing.com) for more information



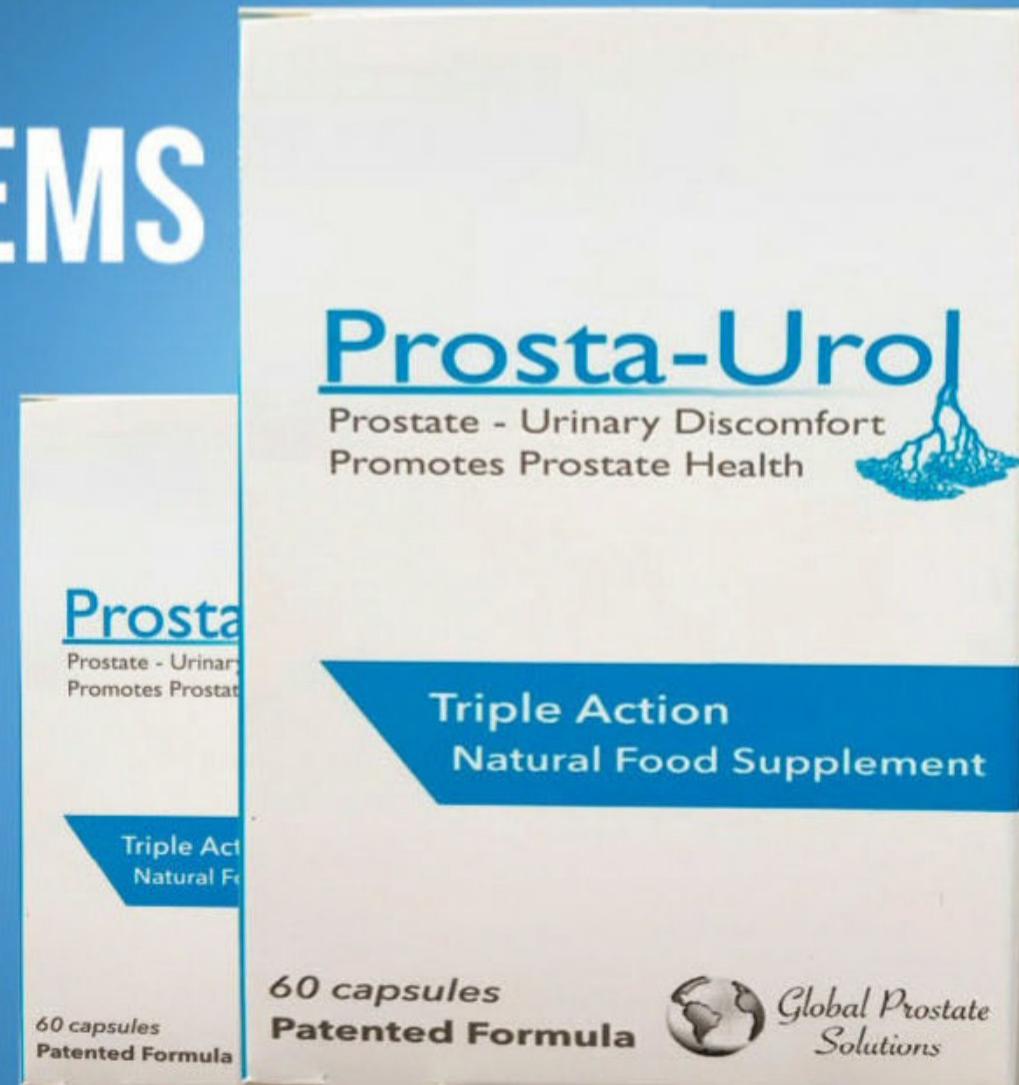
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# 91 HISTORIC PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR AWARDS 2019

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FOR STUNNING IMAGES OF THE WORLD'S HISTORICAL SITES



# HOMEFRONT



88

OPINION: HAVE D-DAY EVENTS  
BECOME A 'CIRCUS'?



92

THE LATEST MILITARY HISTORY  
BOOKS ON THE SHELVES



98

ARTEFACT OF WAR: 17TH CENTURY  
FRENCH OFFICER'S COAT

# MUSEUMS & EVENTS

Discover archaeological finds from an 18th century rebellion and London's rivers, as well as studies of the Peterloo Massacre

## JACOBITE ARTEFACTS

The National Trust of Scotland has unearthed the first historic finds from a 1719 battlefield



Like many other engagements during the Jacobite rebellions, Scots fought in large numbers on the side of the Hanoverian government as well as for the Stuarts

The Battle of Glenshiel was the largest engagement of the 1719 Jacobite Rebellion in Scotland. A force of over 1,000 Jacobites, including a significant contingent of Spanish troops, attempted to restore James Francis Edward Stuart "The Old Pretender" to the British throne but they were defeated in the Highlands.

Three hundred years after the battle at Glenshiel, a team of archaeologists has uncovered the first historic remains from the battlefield. Led by the National Trust for Scotland (NTS), the team has uncovered large fragments of a coehorn mortar shell and a musket ball. The pieces of ordnance were fired by the British government forces at the Jacobites and the discovery of the mortar shell is of particular historical importance.

The coehorn was a small, squat gun that could fire shells in high arcs onto the Jacobite and Spanish positions. The resulting noise and explosions would have caused disorder and panic among some of the Jacobites although the Spanish famously stood firm. One source even records that the grass and heather were set alight by red-hot fragments. Glenshiel was the first time that this kind of mortar was known to be used on British soil and the discovery confirms the interpretation of a smaller fragment found nearby in 2018.

The team that assembled to discover these finds was a mixture of archaeologists, volunteers and members of the NTS Scotland's Thistle Camp working holidays scheme. They came together to mark the 300th anniversary of the battle and Glenshiel itself is often described as one of Scotland's most picturesque battlefield. It remains largely unchanged since 1719 and visitors can still see walls built by the Jacobites to protect them from the government mortar bombardment.

Although the 1719 rebellion is often overlooked, Derek Alexander, head of archaeology at the NTS, explains how the rising had a lasting impact

on the Highlands and the Jacobite cause, "The rising fizzled out but it led to General Wade and his building of the road systems and garrisons in locations across the Highlands. It fixed the government's minds on the clans and the Jacobites. Its failure also meant that there was little appetite for another uprising until Bonnie Prince Charlie and the '45. It effectively put paid to Jacobite ambitions for 30 years, which is a long time."

Alexander describes his amazement at the discoveries, "Finds like this are really important. They are tangible remains of historic events, which can be quite rare. When we hold something in our hands that we know came from a single event, 300 years ago – that is incredibly powerful."

The National Trust for Scotland is a charity that celebrates and protects Scotland's heritage.



This flattened musket ball had been fired uphill by a government soldier at the Spanish positions where it had hit a wall

FOR MORE INFORMATION: [WWW.NTS.ORG.UK](http://WWW.NTS.ORG.UK)

FOR THE FULL PROGRAMME VISIT: [WWW.MANCHESTERHISTORIES.CO.UK](http://WWW.MANCHESTERHISTORIES.CO.UK)

*Many of the Peterloo 2019 events are taking place at Manchester Central Library*

Images: Manchester Histories



## COMMEMORATING PETERLOO

Manchester Histories has launched a large programme of events and activities to commemorate the bicentenary of one of the city's darkest hours

The Peterloo Massacre was one of the most defining events in British history. On 16 August 1819, 60,000 people gathered at St Peter's Field in Manchester to peacefully demand parliamentary reform. Regular troops and militiamen were deployed and the local yeomanry charged the crowd. Eighteen people were killed and 700 injured in an event that is now viewed as a historical watershed.

To commemorate the 200th anniversary of the massacre, the charity Manchester Histories is working with organisations and communities across Greater Manchester to deliver a programme of activities. With lottery funding, these combine public events, learning opportunities and creative exploration. The Peterloo 2019 Commemorations opened on 7 June

2019 and will culminate on 16 August with the unveiling of a permanent memorial that has been commissioned by Manchester City Council. The surrounding events and activities have been produced by members of the public, cultural organisations, historians, writers and artists.

Karen Shannon, chief executive of Manchester Histories explains why remembering 16 August 1819 is so important, "The Peterloo Massacre plays a significant role in the history of Manchester. The fallout from what followed was felt across the country and continues to be felt 200 years later. We want to ensure that more people know about what happened at Peterloo and consider some of the parallels of what happened then and what is happening today, not just in Manchester but also globally."

## FINDS FROM THE RIVERBED

The Museum of London Docklands has launched an exhibition that explores the rich archaeology from the capital's waterways

Located in a Grade One-listed Georgian sugar warehouse in east London, the Museum of London Docklands tells the story of the capital as a port, river and city. Secret Rivers is a new exhibition



A selection of swords that were discovered in the River Thames

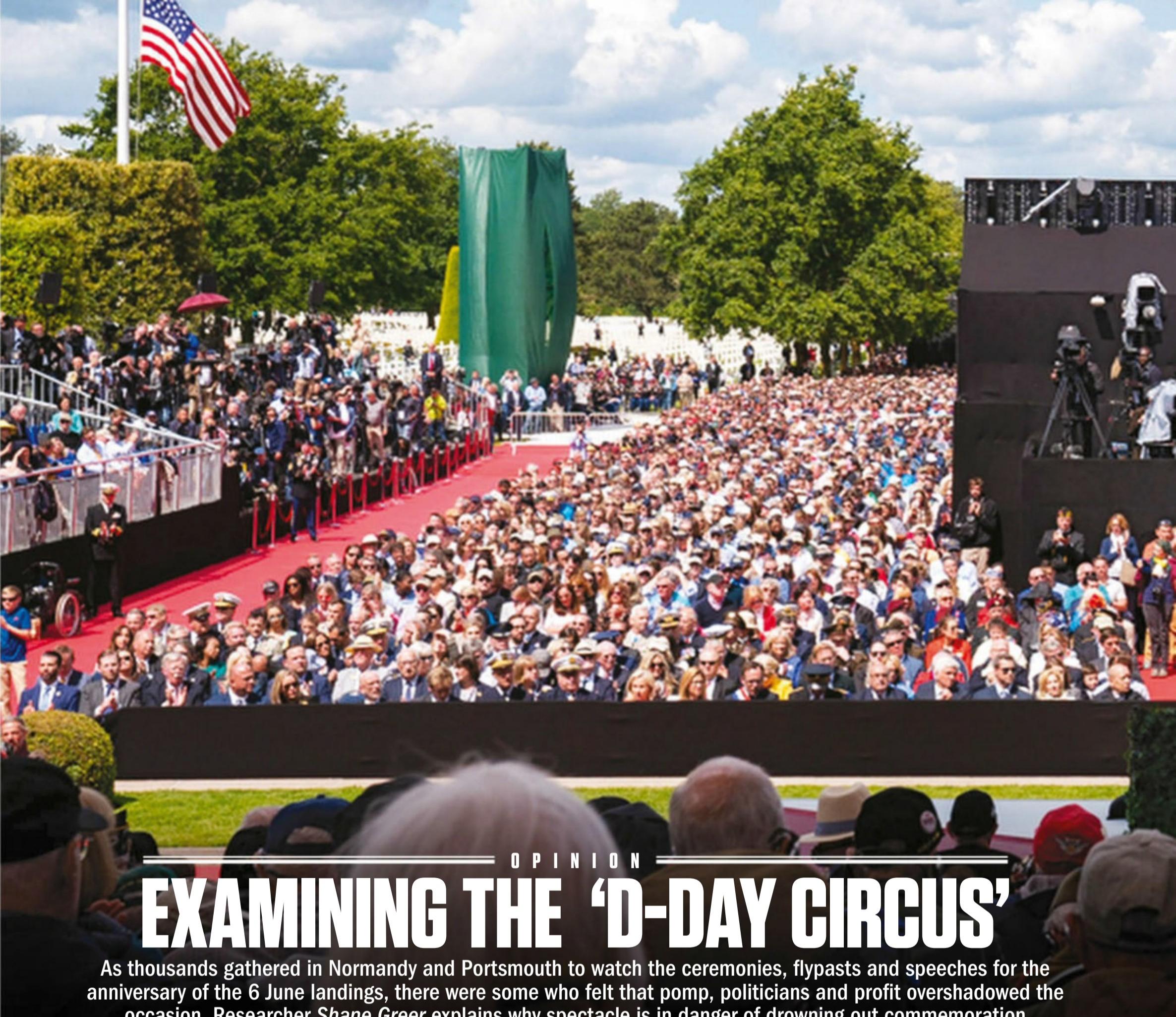
combining art and archaeology to uncover the mysteries of London's rivers. It shows how the Thames and its tributaries, above and below ground, have shaped the city. These waterways have been exploited for centuries and used for transport, industry or waste disposal.

Many archaeological artefacts have since been uncovered and are now on display. Their variety ranges from Roman brooches, monastic stained glass windows and even a toilet seat but there are also several military finds. Swords have been uncovered, including a Bronze Age copper-alloy sword dating from c.1200-700 BCE. 15th-17th century metal tips from scabbards have also been found, which reflects the Fleet Valley's importance as a metalworking centre. One of the most historically intriguing finds is a set of Roman dice. Their discovery suggests that the Fleet's presence in Londinium was on the boundary of the walled city rather than at its heart because those leaving or entering the gates could discard objects.

Secret Rivers is running until 27 October 2019 and the free museum is open daily from 10am-6pm.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: [WWW.MUSEUMOFLONDON.ORG.UK](http://WWW.MUSEUMOFLONDON.ORG.UK)

Images: Museum of London



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**OPINION**

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# EXAMINING THE ‘D-DAY CIRCUS’

As thousands gathered in Normandy and Portsmouth to watch the ceremonies, flypasts and speeches for the anniversary of the 6 June landings, there were some who felt that pomp, politicians and profit overshadowed the occasion. Researcher *Shane Greer* explains why spectacle is in danger of drowning out commemoration

**O**n June 6 2019 the 75th anniversary of the Normandy landings took place in France. In the weeks leading up to the event our computer screens, newspapers, phones and televisions were awash with D-Day related content. The event was heralded as the last time a relatively large number of veterans would descend once more onto the beaches of Normandy in an act of remembrance to their fallen comrades who perished storming those very same beaches, fighting through bocage and liberating France one village at a time pushing ever closer towards Germany itself in 1944.

It is painful to think that a sizeable number of these brave men and women will not be around to see the next milestone of remembrance, the 80th anniversary in 2024. With many of them now into their late 90s it is a sad fact that as each day passes, we

are hearing of their dwindling numbers in newspaper articles and obituaries.

This made the 75th all the more poignant and an event that could really be seen as the end of an era. A sombre affair where groups of veterans could meet up, talk of old times, walk their battlefields in peace, visit their friends who never made it, reminisce and say a final goodbye before once more boarding their buses, trains, boats and planes for their journey home.

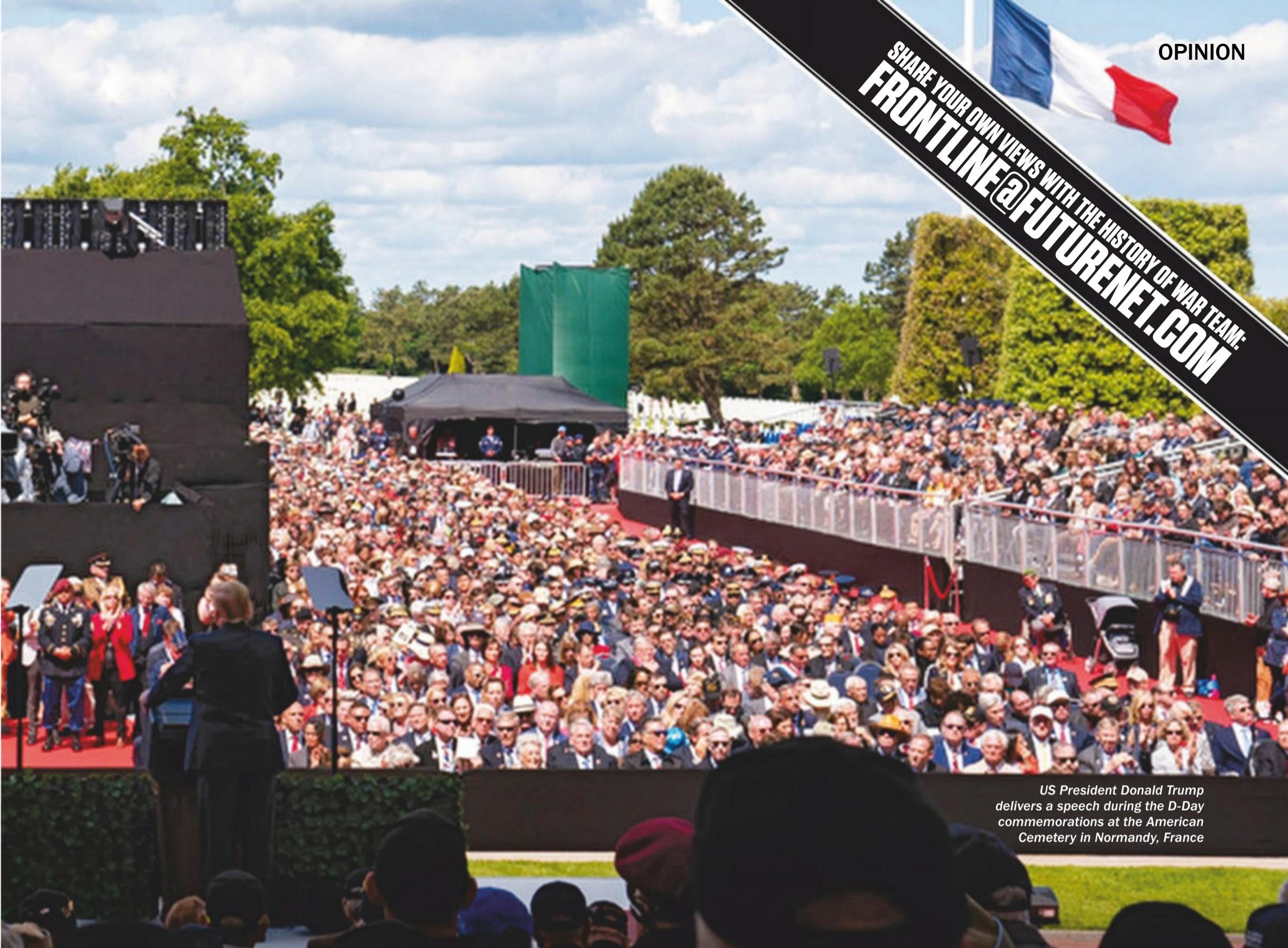
I believe it is a real shame that for the 75th anniversary increasing focus was placed on President Donald Trump's attendance, President Putin's non-attendance, the current state of Brexit in the UK and how the Right and Left of the political spectrum twisted the event to suit their own visions and jostles for power.

The media did a fair job reporting on the anniversary for those who could not attend, but it seemed that the old soldiers spent more time getting asked to do interviews than they

did attending events and surely must have been exhausted by the end of the day. These men are still with us and can be interviewed at any time. They should have had the space to be alone with their thoughts on this, their special day, but instead were treated like celebrities. Although it is important to thank them while we can, the constant harassment from members of the public to get them to pose for photographs or sign autographs must surely have been an added strain on aging bones.

Finally, we have certain re-enactors who descend on these events kitted out in what they believe to be period uniform, driving through the villages en route to the beaches throwing out packs of chewing gum and tossing salutes to confused onlookers. They act as if they are the main event and will be getting a medal for liberating the region when in fact, they are nothing more than photo opportunities for bemused members of the public and a

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**FRONTLINE@FUTURENET.COM**



*US President Donald Trump delivers a speech during the D-Day commemorations at the American Cemetery in Normandy, France*

strange occurrence to the real soldiers. Some look ridiculous, their uniforms and badges may be interesting to the casual passer-by, but for those more educated in WWII equipment, they become a target of ridicule and bewilderment. This is not a cosplay event and to see grown men crossing on the ferries from England in full military uniforms was odd. When asked why they were going kitted out in costume they state they are going to show their respects. If that were the case would a suit and tie not be more appropriate? Stay at home, watch it on television, let the veterans be the centre of attention and just cut out the cries of "Currahee" as you speed by in your Willy's Jeeps festooned with flags.

Without a doubt living history groups and re-enactors have their time and place in educating but an anniversary attended by veterans is not the time nor the place.

It is sad that the events around D-Day now appear to have morphed into a kind of military history festival where making money is up there alongside remembrance. Battlefield guiding companies put itineraries together covering the anniversary. Local businesses increase their prices over the few days either side of 6 June making money from the influx of visitors while each village, museum or historical landmark vies for the crowds, drafting in 'attractions' in

## "IT IS SAD THAT THE EVENTS AROUND D-DAY NOW APPEAR TO HAVE MORPHED INTO A KIND OF MILITARY HISTORY FESTIVAL WHERE MAKING MONEY IS UP THERE ALONGSIDE REMEMBRANCE"

the form of musicians, living history groups, vehicle displays and even going as far as inviting memorabilia collectors to attend and show off their collections. Street vendors pitch up selling D-Day related gifts, t-shirts, baseball caps, keyrings, scarves and pens all with the sole purpose of exploiting the event for financial gain.

It is important that we remember the sacrifice of all those who took part in the D-Day landings, those who didn't make it, those who did but have faced a lifetime of mental scars, the civilians who got caught up in the battle and everyone else affected – but there is a right way of doing it and there is a wrong way.

Turning the 6 June into a money-making military history festival is the wrong way. In the coming years it would be good to see the veterans that do make it for the anniversary given the freedom to spend time in their own thoughts instead of being rolled out like an attraction for the crowds.

Without a doubt many will return next year, some the following year and maybe the year

after that but fewer and fewer will make the trip and before we know it the commemorations will be noticeable for the absence of these old warriors and one day in the not too distant future all we will be left with on the 6 June in Normandy will be crowds of people listening to politicians pushing their own agenda, re-enactors loitering around looking to get their photo taken and media outlets replaying old veteran interviews.

D-Day will eventually pass out of living memory which makes it more important to cherish our time with those who fought for our freedom and not turn their day into a gaudy festival.

**Shane Greer** is head of military history at [hidden-history.com](http://hidden-history.com) as well as co-ordinator of WarGen, [www.wargen.org](http://www.wargen.org), a project launched by Dan Snow and James Holland with the aim of producing an oral history of the memories of those who lived through WWII.

# DISCOVER THE INCREDIBLE STORY OF WORLD WAR II'S PACIFIC THEATRE

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# HISTORIC PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR 2019

Trip Historic and All About History are once again looking for your incredible shots of the world's greatest historic sites

## Red Sands Sea Forts

BY MARK EDWARDS – ENGLISH HISTORY WINNER 2018



The annual Historic Photographer of the Year Awards is back, searching for the finest photographic talent, inspired by historical sites around the globe. Embarking on the third year of the awards, online historical travel guide Trip Historic will be taking both professional and amateur entries that celebrate the very best historic places and cultural sites across the globe.

From grand, iconic architecture, to quiet, lesser-known locations, this year's judging panel will be looking for not only stunning, technically brilliant photography, but also an engagement with the story of the subject and its importance in our past. By taking part, entrants will get the chance to win an array of prizes including a money-can't-buy behind-the-scenes heritage experience from Historic England and the opportunity to have their short film broadcast on the television channel HISTORY™ for all the world to see!

This year the Awards will include specialist categories focusing on crucial periods and regions of history, including the Historic England category and the HISTORY™ Short Filmmaker award. Official partners include **History of War**'s sister title, **All About History** magazine, as well as HISTORY®, Historic England and The Association For Historical And Fine Art Photography.

**"LAST YEAR SAW AN INCREDIBLE ARRAY OF ENTRIES COVERING EVERYTHING FROM ABANDONED SECOND WORLD WAR SEA FORTS TO HAUNTING IMAGES FROM CHERNOBYL AND ATMOSPHERIC ANCIENT CITIES CONSUMED BY DESERT SANDS"**

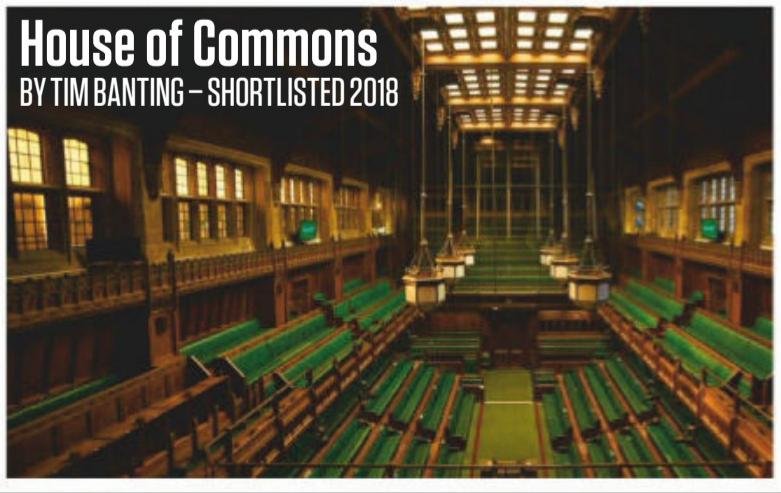
**Dan Snow, Historian and Broadcaster**

THE COMPETITION IS OPEN UNTIL 11.59PM GMT ON SUNDAY 13TH OCTOBER. FOR TIPS ON ENTERING, INTERVIEWS WITH OUR JUDGES, AS WELL AS INFORMATION ON THE RULES AND PRIZES PLEASE VISIT:

## WWW.HISTORICPHOTOGRAPHEROFTHEYEAR.COM

### House of Commons

BY TIM BANTING – SHORTLISTED 2018



### Donnington Castle

BY JONATHAN REID – SHORTLISTED 2018



# HISTORY OF WAR REVIEWS

Our pick of the latest military history titles on the shelves

## INDIANAPOLIS

AN AUTHORITATIVE AND HIGHLY READABLE STUDY OF AMERICA'S GREATEST EVER NAVAL DISASTER

**Authors:** Lynn Vincent and Sara Vladic **Publisher:** Simon & Schuster

**Price:** 9.99 **Released:** Out Now



Above: The U.S. Navy heavy cruiser USS Indianapolis off the Mare Island Naval Shipyard, on 10 July 1945, following her final overhaul and repair of combat damage. This photo was taken before the ship delivered atomic bomb components to Tinian and just 20 days before she was sunk by a Japanese submarine

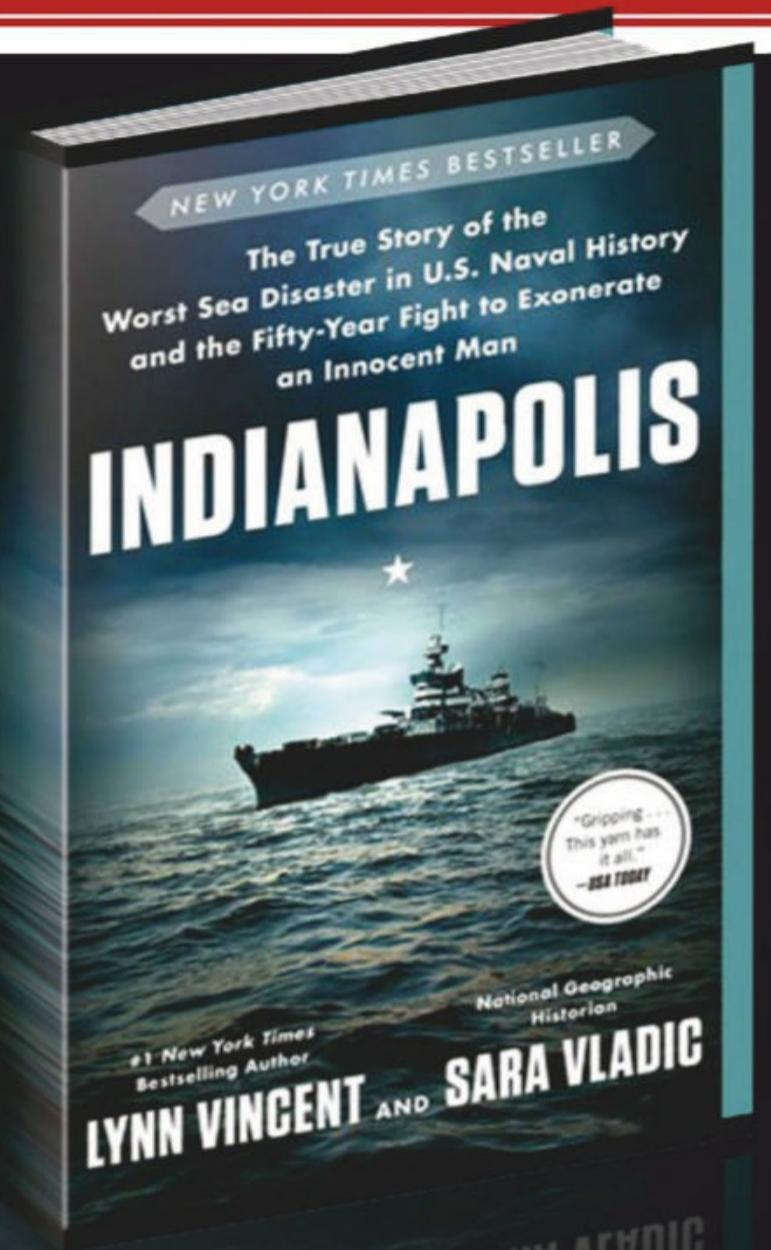
All most people will know about USS Indianapolis will have come from the chilling monologue delivered by the character of Quint in the Steven Spielberg movie *Jaws*. Quint's speech was mostly accurate, but the story is, of course, far bigger than can be crammed into a few minutes of a film. This book tells the full story of the doomed ship, including a litany of bad luck and missed opportunities that could so easily have changed the course of events and saved hundreds of lives.

**"IN THE DAYS THAT FOLLOWED THE SINKING, WITH NOBODY AWARE OF WHAT HAD HAPPENED, THE SURVIVORS OF THE ATTACK SUCCUMBED TO DEHYDRATION, HEAT EXHAUSTION AND SHARK ATTACK. ONLY 316 OF THE SHIP'S 1,195 CREW SURVIVED"**

Lynn Vincent and Sara Vladic have undertaken exhaustive research, including interviews with surviving crew members. The result is an intimate portrayal of a fighting ship during wartime, with many characters brought to life as three-dimensional people. What is perhaps most pleasing is the fact that this level of detail is also extended to the crew of the Japanese submarine that sank Indianapolis. Commander Mochitsura Hashimoto, of the Imperial Japanese Navy submarine I-58, is not portrayed as an enemy, but as a serviceman doing his duty in almost impossible conditions.

Although the actual attack on Indianapolis, and the ensuing tragedy as sharks gathered in huge numbers around the surviving sailors, form the heart of the book, the build-up is extremely important, as it sets the context for what happened in the first minutes of 30 July 1945. (Incidentally, Quint's speech in *Jaws* got it wrong, stating the date as 29 June.) The story includes the most important element associated with the disaster, the failure to realise that a Japanese submarine was operating along the route to be taken by Indianapolis while steaming for the Philippines after delivering parts for the atomic bomb that would be dropped on Hiroshima.

Other events conspired against the ship. Because the waters en route to the Philippines



were considered safe, no escort vessel was assigned and the ship proceeded at less than top speed. A Japanese submarine (almost certainly I-58) might also have been sunk by the destroyer Albert T. Harris, but its antisubmarine rocket projector suffered a targeting malfunction and the sub escaped.

Even after the two torpedoes from I-58 hit Indianapolis, the situation might have been mitigated. A plane flying overhead saw the explosions, but believed it was a simple naval gunnery exercise. Even more frustrating, American intelligence intercepted a report from Commander Hashimoto claiming that he had sunk a ship. The two most important parts of the report, however – the type of vessel sunk and the location – were not deciphered.

In the days that followed the sinking, with nobody aware of what had happened, the survivors of the attack succumbed to dehydration, heat exhaustion and shark attack. Only 316 of the ship's 1,195 crew survived. The book goes on to detail the court-martial of Captain Charles B. McVay III, who was initially criticised for the loss of his ship, then partly exonerated. McVay committed suicide in 1968.

Superbly written, with a depth of information that will please the most demanding reader, Indianapolis is a triumph of historical investigation. **DS**

# HITLER

A MAJOR NEW BIOGRAPHY OF ADOLF HITLER, PSYCHOPATH AND HERO TO MILLIONS OF WILLING FOLLOWERS

**Author:** Peter Longerich **Released:** Out Now

**Publisher:** Oxford University Press **Price:** £30

It would be difficult to name a tyrant in modern history who managed to accumulate such immense supremacy in so short a time as Adolf Hitler. The Führer succeeded in abusing power extravagantly and cling to it tenaciously, only to witness his regime collapse and disintegrate, leaving the blood of tens of millions of lives on his hands. Hitler's tyranny stands as a grotesque example of how personal authority can be acquired and monstrously abused.

Peter Longerich has produced a mammoth new biography of Hitler, in which the German historian reveals a far more interventionist and decisive dictator than was previously assumed. Whether it was foreign policy, waging war, mass murder or even cultural or religious affairs, Hitler took a hands-on and unchallenged approach to policy, down to the smallest detail. The author shows how over time Hitler succeeded in imposing his personal despotism, exercising terrifying and limitless power over the German people.

The book is a near 2,000 page blockbuster crafted from a staggering amount of research that places the author's scholarly credentials above question. That said, some might feel uncomfortable with Longerich's endeavour to place Hitler the person, not just the mad dictator, back in the 'centre' and demonstrate that the Nazi leader was a far shrewder operator than commonly believed. The question of how Hitler managed to engineer his extraordinary rise to power is, the author asserts, due to his ability to exploit individual situations in his own interest and for his own aims.

"A genius," the author says. "That is how Hitler saw himself and how he wanted others to see him." He envisaged himself following the path predestined for him, thanks to his exceptional abilities, his strength of will and his determination. Hitler invested great effort in creating this perception of himself.

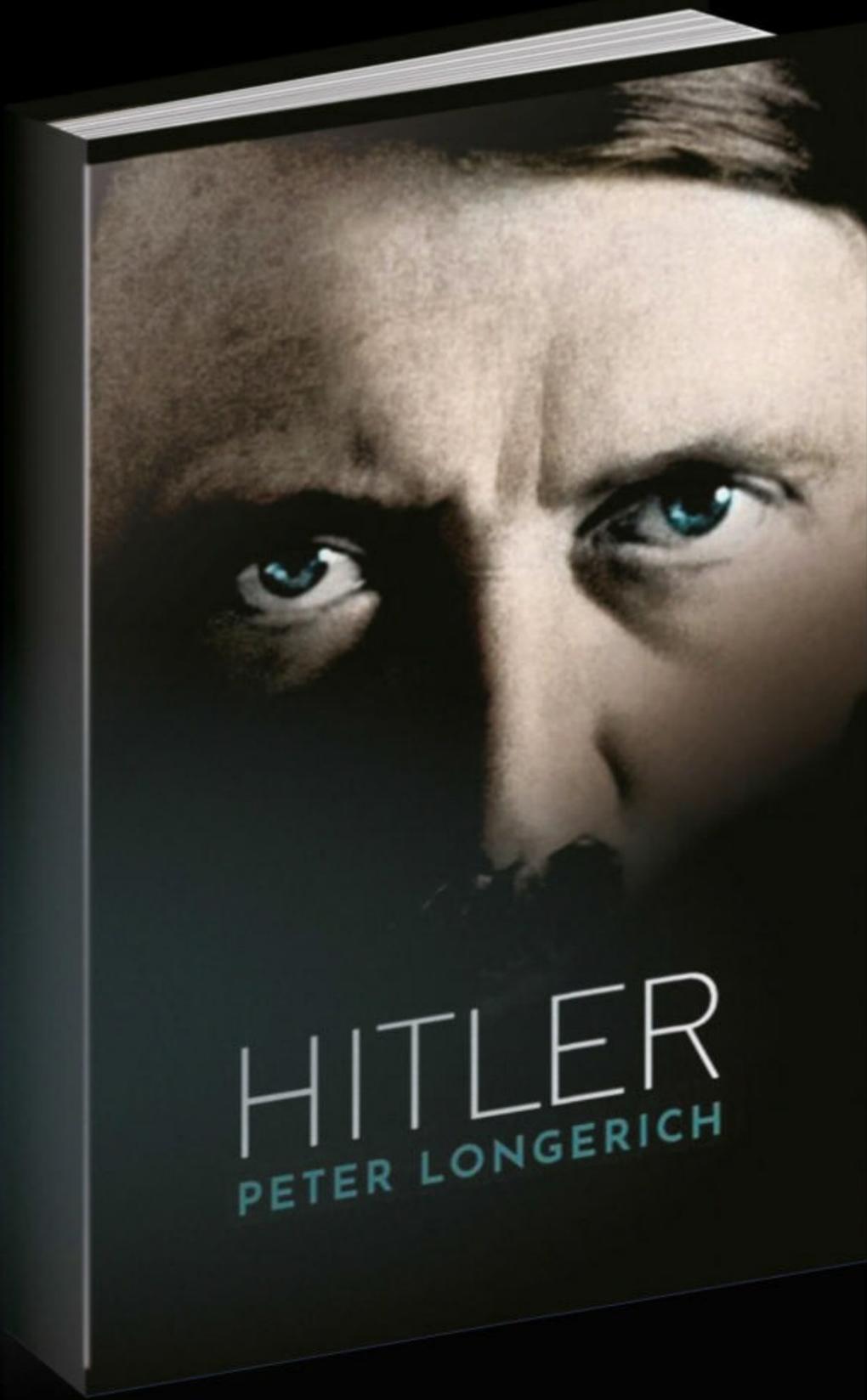
Longerich demonstrates how this self-image came about, rising from depression that turned into fury at the German defeat in the First World War. This is when he reached his fateful decision, to give his life a new direction, "I decided to become a politician," as he relates in *Mein Kampf*. The romantic Wagnerian vision of himself and his mission is something Hitler clung to right up to the end. The drama of Hitler's downfall and extinction is brought to life in the Führer's determination to confront the 'heroic' struggle to the last bullet and man. The author shows how this theme, reminiscent of the 18th century Germanic sagas, traced a common thread running through the dictator's years in power. Hitler's twisted mind clung to the belief that the grand finale planted the seeds of a later 'glorious rebirth', a theme he returned to throughout his political career. Since the defeat at Stalingrad, at the latest, Hitler had been pursuing this notion as a serious political option in the face of the superior power of his enemies.

The concept of total destruction sat comfortably with him even while planning the invasion of Russia. When advised by his generals that Germany would be fighting a two-front war against the US and USSR, his reaction was that if Germany fell, it would bring all of Europe down with it. The Führer had no interest in the consequences for the survivors. JS

**"A GENIUS, THAT IS HOW HITLER SAW HIMSELF AND WANTED OTHERS TO SEE HIM"**



*Above: Longerich's thorough and lengthy biography explores the rise of the dictator, with in-depth analysis of his leadership*



# INVASION

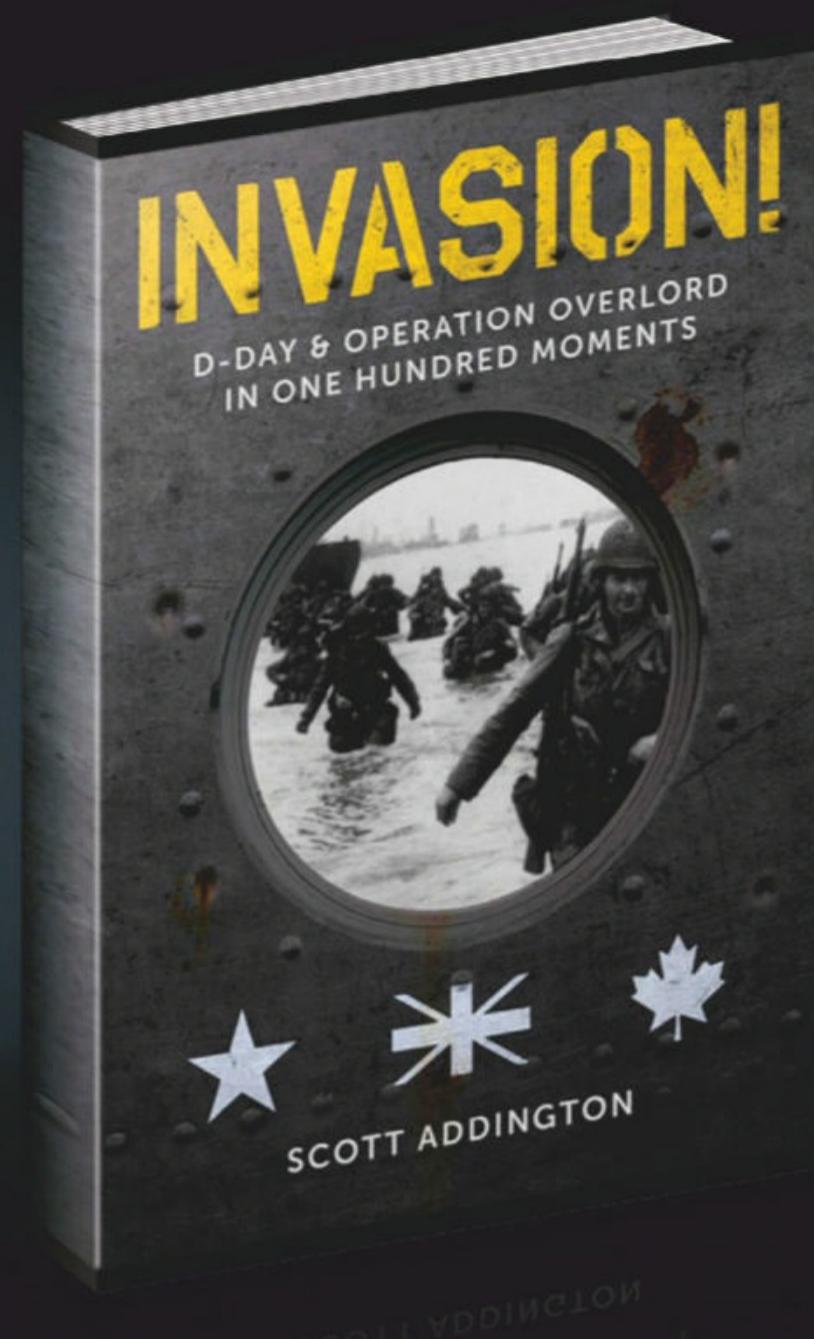
D-DAY RE-TOLD IN ADDINGTON'S CHARACTERISTIC, AND ENGAGING, GRAPHIC STYLE

**Author:** Scott Addington **Publisher:** Unicorn **Price:** £15.99

Those who have read Scott Addington's previous military history books will know what a colourful delight they are. Packed full of intriguing facts, figures and anecdotes – many of which may be little-known to even the most well-read of military history enthusiasts – that are presented in visually appealing infographics and an easy to follow format. The author has that rare talent of producing highly informative works that will greatly appeal to people of a wide age range, from secondary school children to adults and perhaps even the veterans themselves.

Addington's latest title, *Invasion: D-Day And Operation Overlord In One Hundred Moments*, is no exception. As the sub-title suggests, the author has picked 100 important aspects of the Allied invasion of Normandy and subsequent operations to liberate France. Examples include everything from Rommel being at home for his wife's birthday on D-Day (he bought her a nice pair of shoes) to the huge disparity of pay between British and American troops or details about the host of ingenious, sometimes whacky, gadgets the Allies invented for their fight against Germany, including everything from flame throwing 'crocodile' tanks to the Pipeline Under the Ocean (aka PLUTO).

The book is usefully divided into six categories, including: organisational moments, inspirational moments, moments of courage, technological moments, fighting moments, and moments of recognition, reflection and memory. Being organised in this way, the reader can easily dip in and out of items of interest without having to read the book from cover to cover. **MS**



# MY FATHER JOACHIM VON RIBBENTROP

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH FOR THE FIRST TIME, THIS MEMOIR PROVIDES A UNIQUE INSIGHT INTO ONE OF THE KEY FIGURES IN THE BUILD UP TO WWII

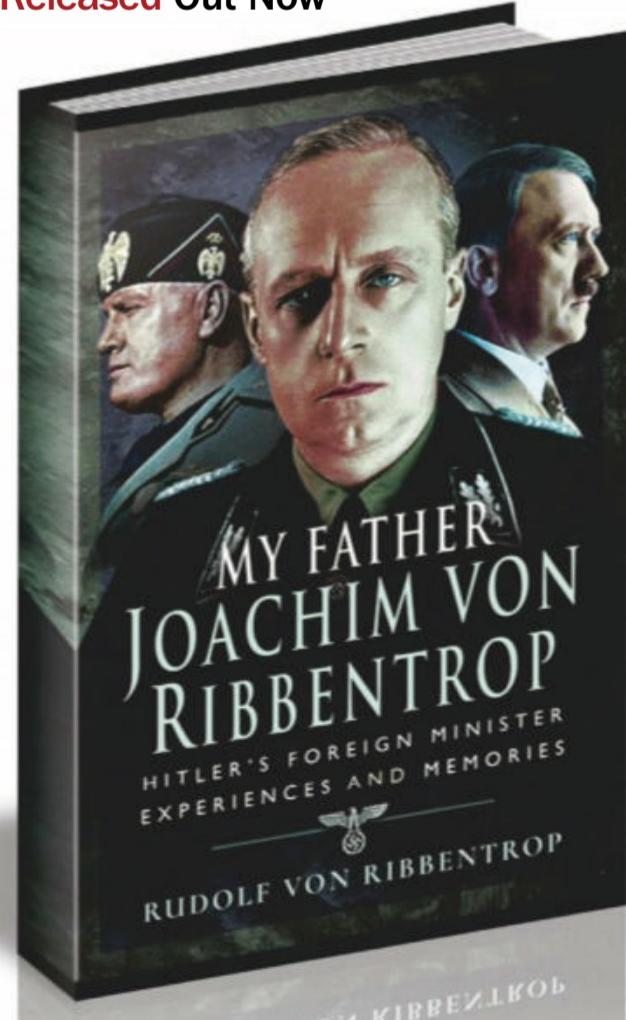
**Author:** Rudolf Von Ribbentrop **Publisher:** Pen & Sword Books **Price:** £30 **Released:** Out Now

Perhaps most infamously remembered for his negotiations of the Pact of Steel with Italy and the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact with the Soviet Union, Joachim von Ribbentrop served as Adolf Hitler's foreign minister from 1938 to 1945. He became a close confidant of the Fuhrer, fatefully advising him that Britain could not aid Poland in the event of an invasion. Yet despite his early success, Ribbentrop's importance declined following the outbreak of war. Nevertheless, he was arrested by the Allies in June 1945 and hanged just over a year later.

*My Father Joachim von Ribbentrop* was originally published in German in 2008 but was not published in English until 2019. The author, Rudolf von Ribbentrop, Joachim's son, was an officer in the Waffen-SS, who

saw service in Finland and on the Eastern Front, taking part in the retreat from Kharkov and the Battle of Prokhorovka. Later, Rudolf fought in France with the 12th SS-Panzer Division Hitlerjugend before his capture by the Americans. He died in May 2019.

The book acts as Rudolf's memoirs of his relationship with his father before and during the war. It claims to offer the reader an objective look at Joachim's role in the lead up to the invasion of Poland and the subsequent attack on the Soviet Union. Given the author's relationship to Joachim and his membership of the SS, some readers may be put off reading this book. However, for those serious about the study of the political workings of the Third Reich, it will nevertheless prove a useful and interesting text. **MS**



**"MY FATHER JOACHIM VON RIBBENTROP WAS ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN GERMAN IN 2008 BUT WAS NOT PUBLISHED IN ENGLISH UNTIL 2019"**

# D-DAY UK 100 LOCATIONS IN BRITAIN

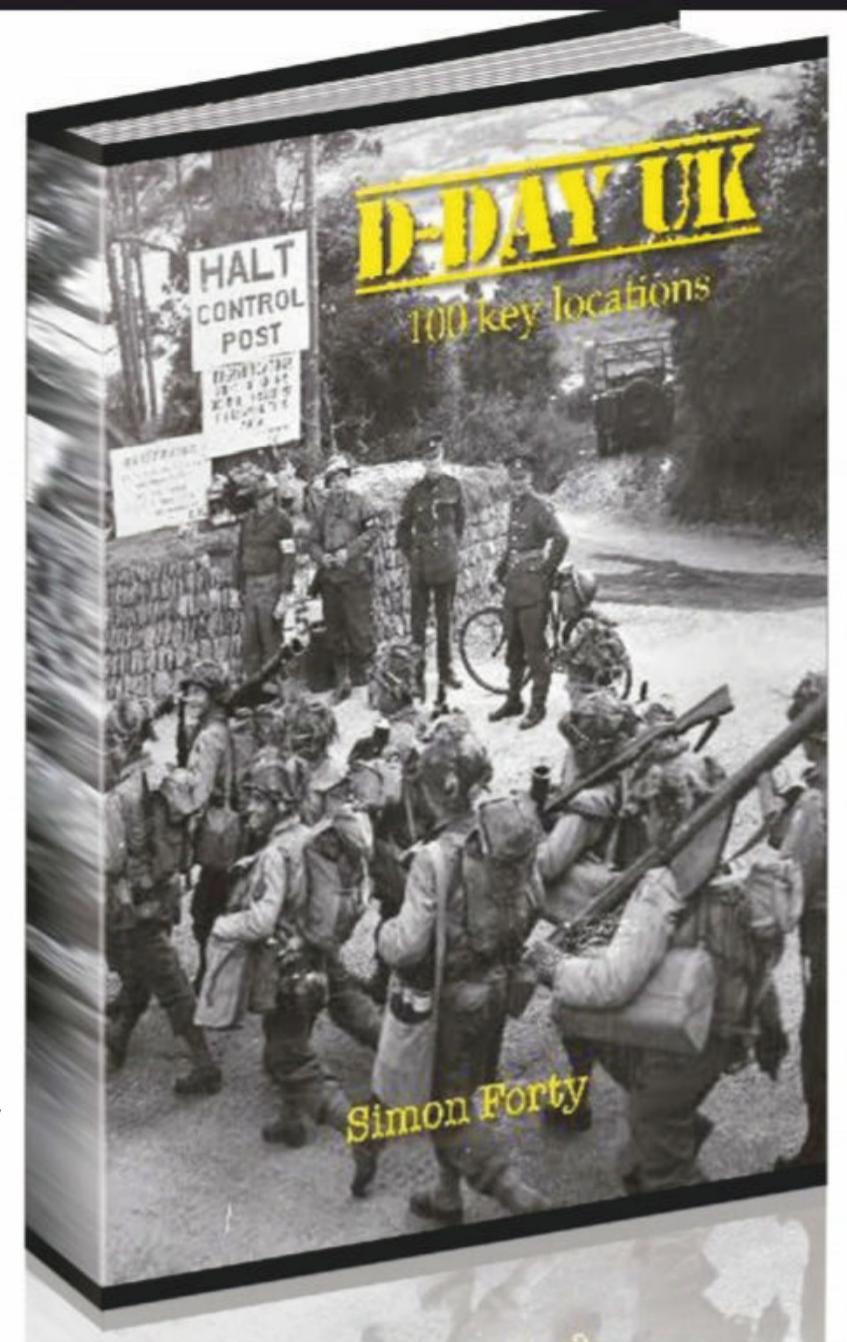
THE FORGOTTEN SITES OF BRITAIN'S D-DAY STAGING GROUNDS ARE RE-DISCOVERED

**Author** Simon Forty **Publisher** Historic England **Price:** £30

With 2019 seeing the 75th anniversary of D-Day, it is perhaps unsurprising to hear of the plethora of new books published on this hugely important historical event. The Allied invasion of Normandy was the result of months of meticulous planning, involving an unimaginable amount of men, equipment and supplies. It was a massive gamble for the Allies, but it turned out to be one of the most successful military operations of all time. And it all had its roots in the UK, a fact that is the focus of *D-Day UK: 100 Locations In Britain*.

Simon Forty has selected 100 important locations across the UK and grouped them into six categories, including: command and control, training, logistics, embarkation points, air operations, and sea operations. Before the reader even delves into the main pages of the book, they are presented with two incredibly interesting maps showing these locations, graphically illustrating the considerable extent of the UK involved in the preparation for D-Day.

Using these 100 locations, the author successfully tells the story of the Allied invasion of France from the planning stage to the landing of troops on the Normandy beaches. In doing so, Forty has provided an intriguing insight into the training given the men – whether they be on land, sea or air – the incredible feat of logistics, and where the Allies embarked huge numbers of troops in the final hours before crossing the English Channel. Of course, many of the locations still exist and the book acts as a guide for those wishing to visit. **MS**



# EYE OF THE STORM 25 YEARS IN ACTION WITH THE SAS

FIRST-HAND DESCRIPTIONS OF BLOODY FIGHTING LACE THIS BLOCKBUSTER SAS ACCOUNT

**Author:** Peter Ratcliffe DCM **Publisher:** O'Mara Books Ltd **Price:** £9.99

It is always the case that accounts of the SAS excite attention among those interested in the history of Britain's military. However, in this work we have what is arguably the definitive inside account of the operations of the secret and secretive regiment across the 25-year period of the author's service – a period that covers some of the unit's most famous and spectacular missions. It is also a period that, perhaps, has spawned a good few of the myths and legends which abound about the unit.

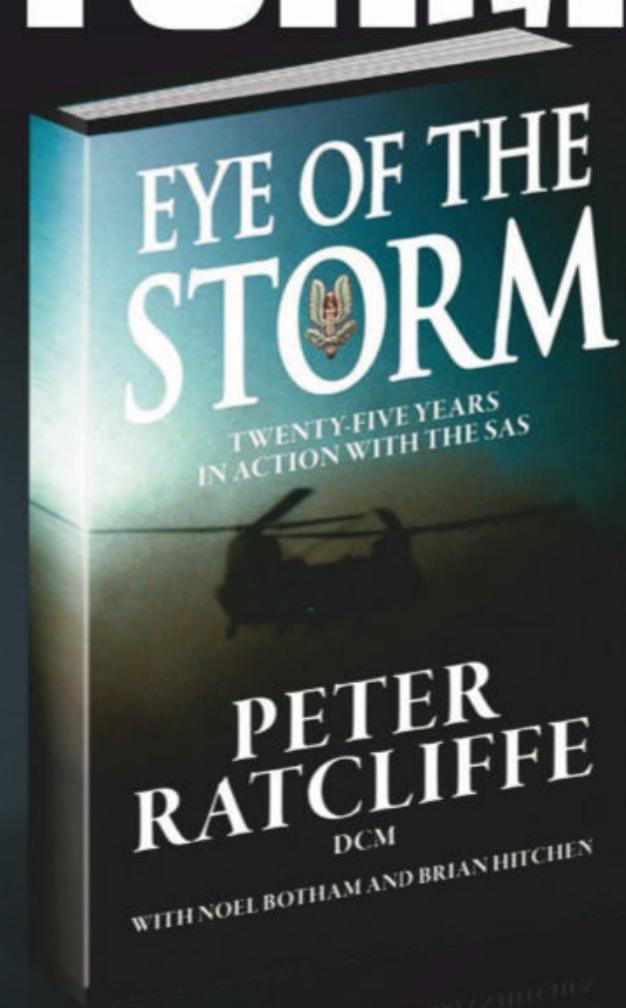
This fast-paced, dramatic, funny and occasionally disturbing account tells first-

hand what it means and takes to serve in the SAS. With descriptions of ferocious and bloody fighting, sudden death, incredible heroism and extraordinary individuals it is a truly eye-opening description of a life in action from Oman in the 1970s, through to Northern Ireland, the Falklands and then the Gulf War.

This is a most welcome addition to the history of the SAS and is a no-nonsense account from one who was there, rather than the creation of an 'outsider' who would otherwise falter with fact and detail. Certainly, it is true to say that *Eye Of The Storm* explodes a good many of the distortions, myths and exaggerations which have grown up around the regiment.

Ratcliffe has produced a most readable and compelling account. If ever there were a military page-turner, this is it! **AS**

"A MOST WELCOME ADDITION TO THE HISTORY OF THE SAS"



5 BEST BOOKS ON

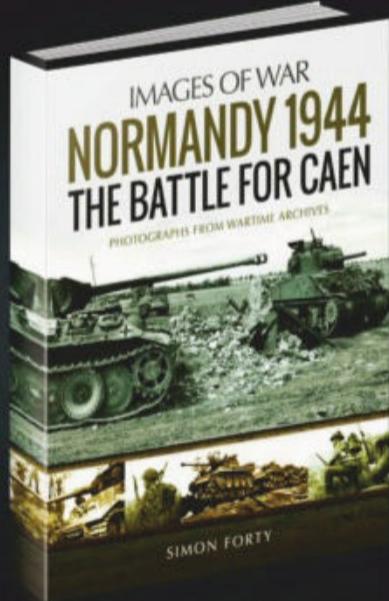
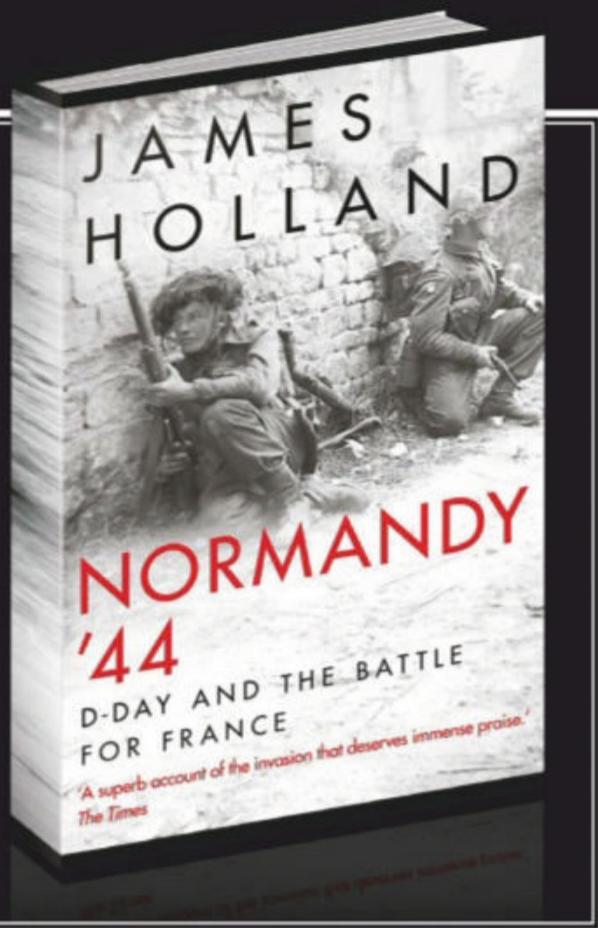
# THE BATTLE FOR CAEN

Beyond the beaches, historians have contributed thousands of pages to the gruelling operations to liberate Normandy

## Normandy '44: D-Day And The Battle For France *James Holland*

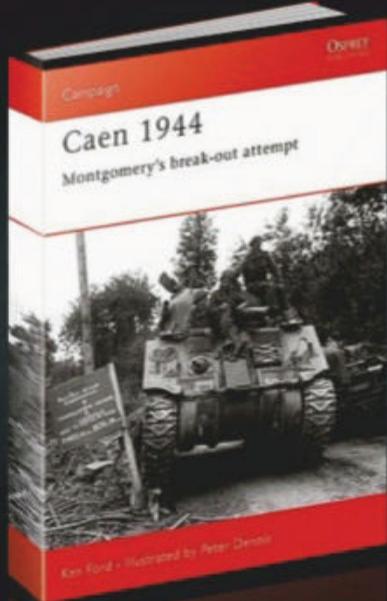
The second of two titles from the prolific historian and broadcaster, following on from a masterful study of the Allied air campaign Big Week, this title re-examines many of the myths surrounding the Battle for Normandy. Drawing upon previously unreleased archives and testimony, Holland provides fresh insight into the operational level of the Normandy campaign, leaving the reader with an even greater appreciation for the sheer scale of the Allied achievement.

**"HOLLAND PROVIDES FRESH INSIGHT INTO THE OPERATIONAL LEVEL OF THE NORMANDY CAMPAIGN"**



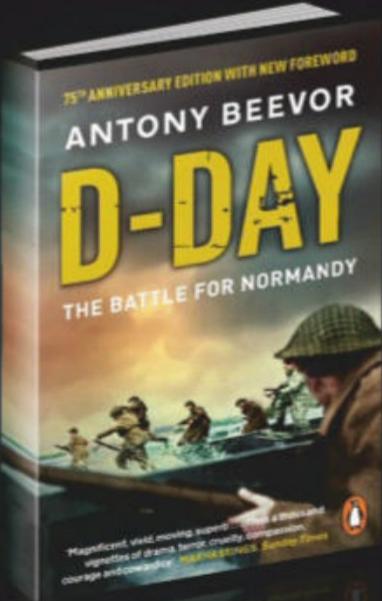
**Images Of War:  
Normandy 1944 The  
Battle For Caen**  
*Simon Forty*

In this detailed, graphic account, military history author Simon Forty provides a fascinating insight into the intense fighting in and around Caen. Included are photographs of opposing forces, the conditions, the terrain, the equipment and weaponry deployed during the battle.



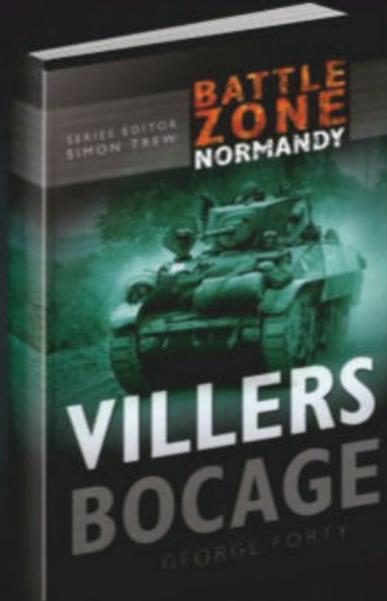
**Caen 1944:  
Montgomery's  
Break-Out Attempt**  
*Ken Ford*

Packed with maps and illustrations, author Ken Ford's publication provides an accessible introduction to the campaign for Caen. Included are detailed maps of the Anglo-Canadian Operations Epsom, Goodwood and Charnwood, which ultimately resulted in the capture of the city on 9 July 1944.



**D-Day:  
The Battle For  
Normandy**  
*Antony Beevor*

Award-winning historian Antony Beevor's account of Operation Overlord has recently been re-released, in time for the 75th anniversary of the campaign. Using first-hand accounts, and dramatic, accessible language, Beevor's book is incredibly thorough in its re-telling of the Allied victory.



**Battle Zone  
Normandy:  
Villers Bocage**  
*George Forty*

A former officer of the Royal Tank Regiment and curator of the Bovington Tank Museum in Dorset, England, George Forty brings a unique insight into the armoured clashes, in the week after D-Day. These encounters provide a vital understanding of the subsequent campaigns to take Caen: a Day 1 objective.

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NEXT MONTH

# DEFENDING AGAINST THE BLITZKRIEG

Discover the untold story of how valiant Polish  
defenders fought back against the German invasion

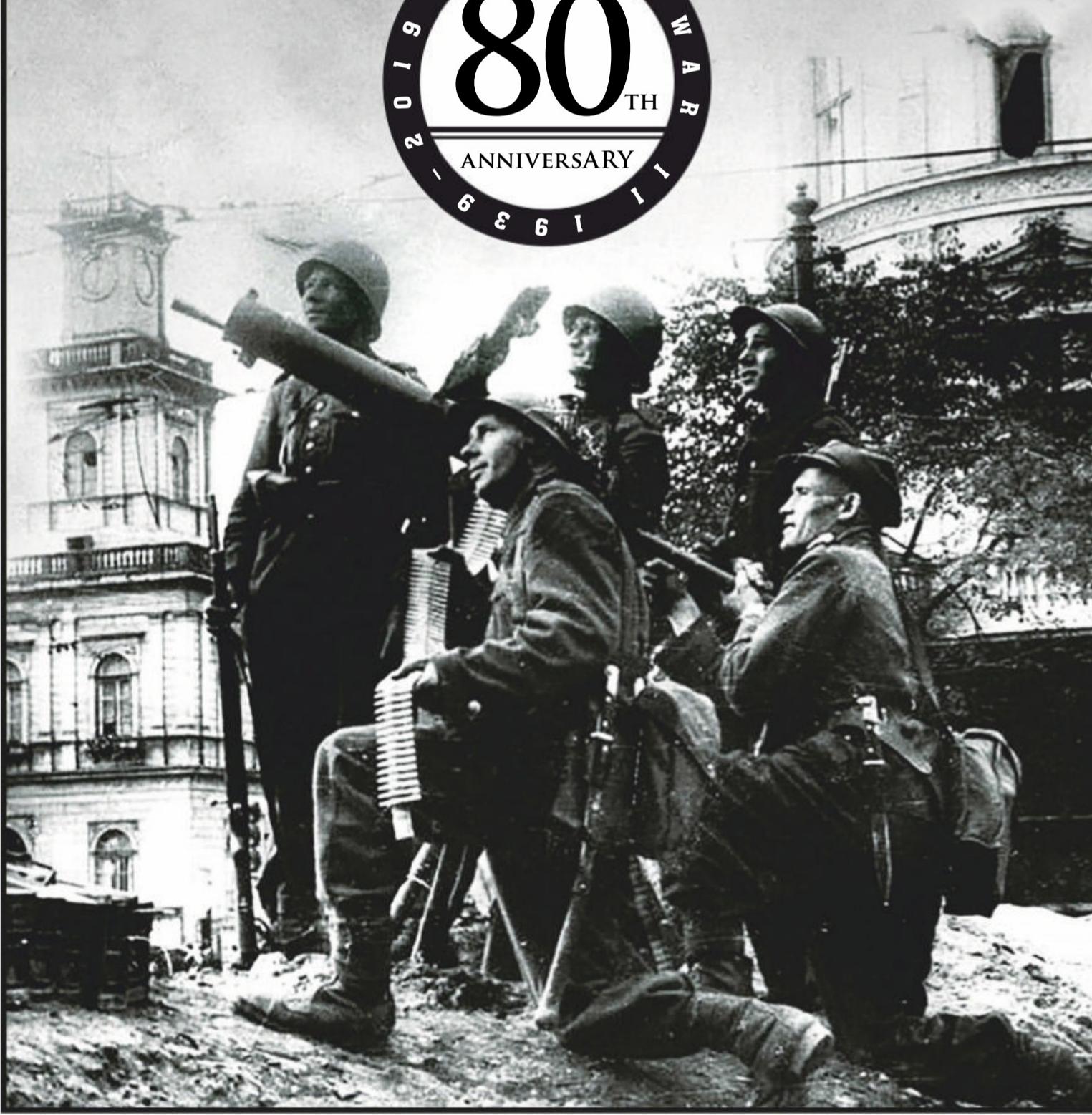


Image: Alamy

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# FRENCH OFFICER'S COAT

This finely made uniform belonged to a high-ranking commander in Louis XIV's army

In the late 17th and early 18th centuries, France was the dominant European power and Louis XIV was the continent's most powerful absolute monarch. Known as the "Sun King", Louis' hegemony over his rivals was in large part due to the reformed French Royal Army that he presided over.

When Louis began his personal rule in 1661, his army was large but disorganised and not entirely under his control. Under the guidance of his war secretaries, the king's army became centralised and disciplined with the introduction of a regimental system and improved equipment. Louis' foreign policy became defined by warfare and France was involved in three major wars during his reign: the Franco-Dutch War, Nine Years' War and the War of the Spanish Succession.

French fortunes in these wars were decidedly mixed with territorial gains made in some and humiliating defeats inflicted in others. Nevertheless, throughout these conflicts Louis' soldiers fought with courage and panache. As befitting a king who built the

Palace of Versailles, his army was also immaculately dressed.

This magnificent pictured coat dates from c.1690-1710 during the height of Louis' campaigns. It is made from a fine quality heavy cloth with silk cuffs and would have been worn by a "general officer" or even a marshal. As well as the cuffs, the ornate covered buttons are richly detailed in a French style with gold spangles and wire.

It is also notable that the skirts of the coat are full and flared, which indicates that a mounted officer would have worn it.

**Above:** Marshal Villars leads a French charge at the Battle of Denain in 1712. He is seen wearing an officer's coat that is similar in appearance to the pictured example



**"THIS MAGNIFICENT PICTURED COAT DATES FROM C.1690-1710"**

*Left: The colour of the coat's cloth is known as Prussian blue, whose pigments were one of the first to be synthetically made by German chemists*

NATIONAL  
**ARMY**  
MUSEUM

The French officer's coat is held in the collections of the National Army Museum in Chelsea, London. For more information visit: [www.nam.ac.uk](http://www.nam.ac.uk)



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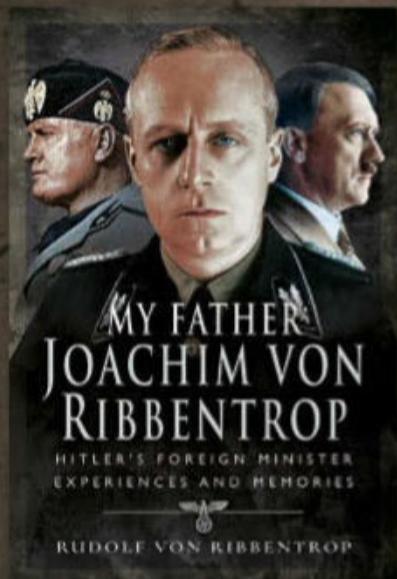
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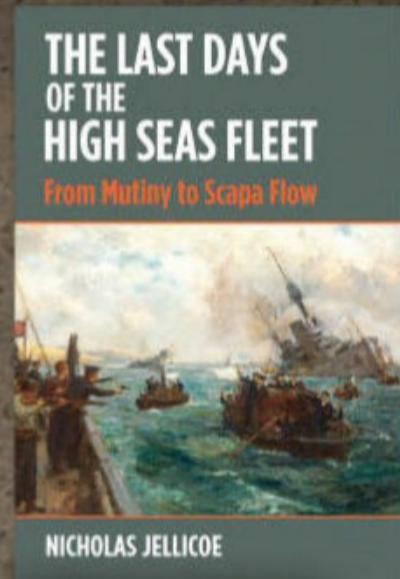
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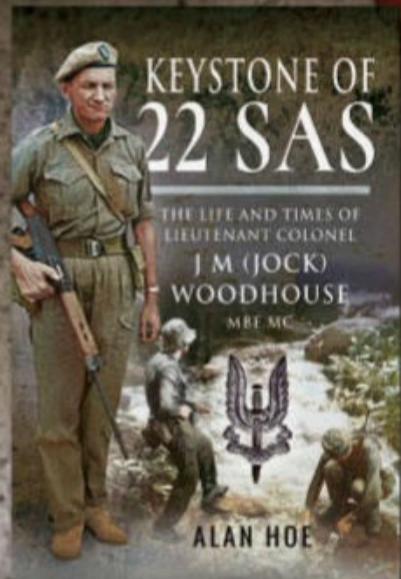
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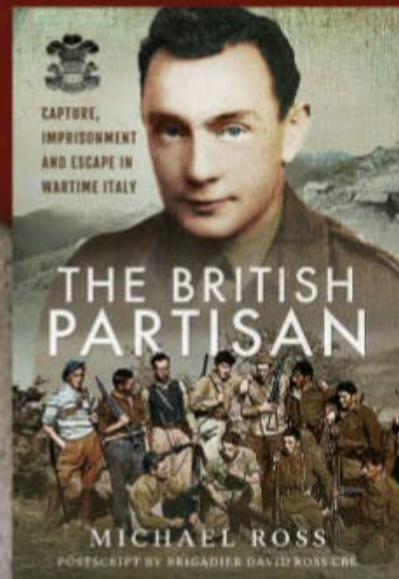
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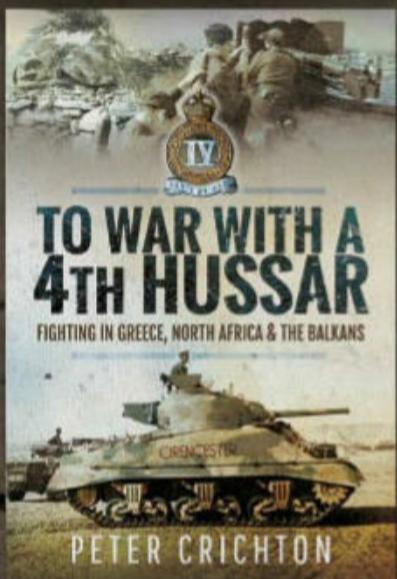
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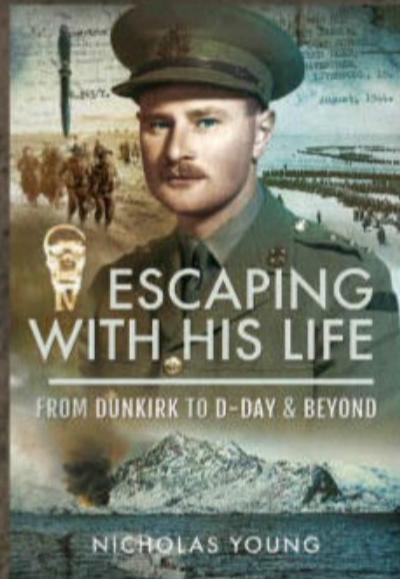
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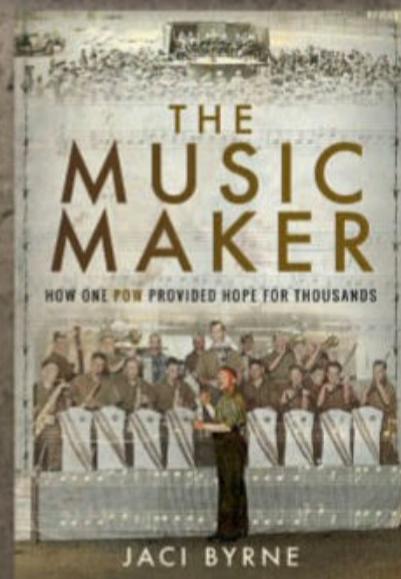
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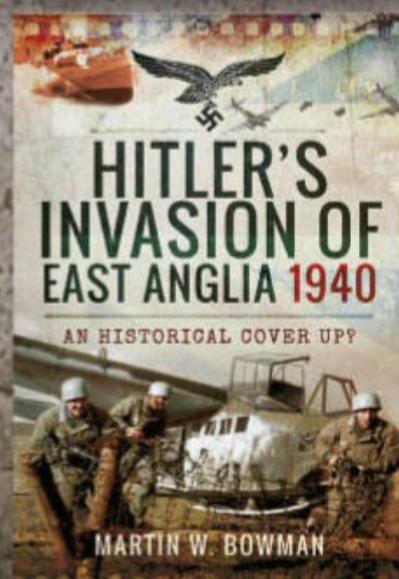
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